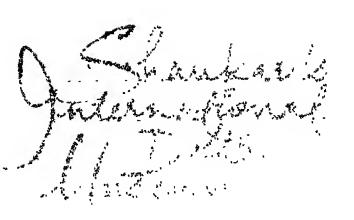
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Circulation & Advertisements A.J. Joseph

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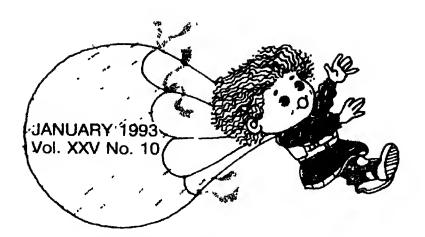
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A LETTER TO YOU

AROUND THE WORLD AUSTRALIA

Ravi Laitu

SKY ABOVE EARTH BELOW

O P Bhagat
A Maori folk tale

THE PRIDE OF THE INDIAN
AIR FORCE—
AIR FORCE MUSEUM
T. S. Sudhur

THE OLD WOMAN AND THE CROW

Comics rendering of a picture book by Shankar, published by CBT

THE TRIAL OF STRENGTH Vinita Agarwal

A DAY FOR DRAWING Bhavana Nair

FROM BELLATERA TO
PLACA CATALUNYA
Karna Basu

34 THE GOLD CHAIN THEFT Vandana Kumarı Jena

Nita Colvin
A CEE-NFS feature.

∴ THE GIRL WHO WAS LEFT BEHIND Cheryl Rao

49 THE BIG CATCH

Alaka Shankar
Beginning the comics of an adventure story published by Children's Book Trust

TALES OF COURAGE

E Sharlaja Nair

THE INATTENTIVE BOY R Vishal

FROM RAGS TO RICHES

Vayayanti Tonpe

MY FIRST AIRPLANE FLIGHT
Nthar Mehta

BOOK NEWS

THE TREASURE BOX

Sarojini Sinha

THE DREAM

Vaishali Sinha





Cover design Khitish Chatterjee

DEAR EDITOR ...

I don't know why man is so destructive. I guess it's because of the immense power god has given him. For that he must be grateful, but instead he is misusing his power. A few days ago they showed a programme on TV. In the environment section they showed that the Project Tiger just may be a flop since in the entire country of India, there are only about 3000 tigers. And in Australia people have

Is it "because of the immense power God has given him," that man constantly craves the new? Why else would we be in a hurry to ring out the old. and ring in the new? A New Year is definitely a time of rejoicing, of joy, of looking forward to new prospects. As the midnight hour approaches, it infuses us with a new spirit, a born-again feeling that promises us a chance to dream anew. But at what premium do we want the new, if we are willing to discard the old, at the tick-and-the-tock of the clock?

The new year will soon be not-so-new. The old will become older. It is what we pick and choose

started killing Kangaroos for their meat. I wonder why man wants to kill the only peaceful organisms of the world? OK, he can't keep his hands quiet, but for that why should he take his anger out on those animals? God, please bless those peaceful and innocent souls and teach some sense to those ruthless people who value their lives but don't care about other's lives.

Sarıta Harı (13), Bangalore

from the old, to take into the new that will decide the quality of our "new" year.

Children's World hopes it will be full of bright prospects for all its readers - full of happiness and JOY

Through these pages we hope to give you a whist of freshness and newness every month of 1993.

Begining this new year we take you on a voyage Around the World. Starting with the continent of which it is said "like shifting symbols of hope deferred a land where you never know." These two pages however, we hope will let you know a lot about Australia. The Maori tale tells you of the Australia of old...

I liked the November issue of Children's World. It is the only magazine in the market which I think understands the feelings of children and their needs. It is full of stories and poems written by children. People of all the age-groups enjoy Children's World very much. It is my favourite magazine. Vishal Tayal (13),

New Delhi

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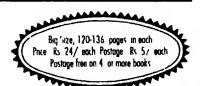
The hair-raising exploits of the Bravery Award winners unfold in these pages, making you eager to look out for all those courageous faces on elephant-back on January 26, at the Republic Day Parade.

What? You miss the grand finale of the parade, the glorious fly past? We do too, so we took off on a visit to the pride of the Indian Air Force, the Air Force Museum at Palam, New Delhi... Among other features.

So ready yourself for take-off. It is going to be a high-flying year. Soar away and scale new heights - Happy New Year and God Bless!

P.L.A.Y ncrease

It's like killing two birds with one stone.



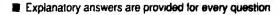
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Dear newnesses, nownesses and highnesses,

Nothing, I tell you, nothing at all in this life is fair Take this New Year business Why on earth should it start on the first of January? Why? I think the New Year should start on a separate day, a special day between the end of the final exams and the beginning of the holidays There should be one special day, without any month attached to it It should be merely called New Year's Day and our holidays should begin the day after so that the celebrations can go on I have given great and serious thought to this business and I think my way is more logical than the way it is now, the way of the world

Raghu and I were discussing this one afternoon, while the cold and heavy winds of December blew all across us. "This is not new year weather," Raghu grumbled.
"This wind makes me feel unwanted and like an orphan. You know whenever you read about orphans, there is a description of cold rain and snow and sleet and stuff like that."

"That is done on purpose," I explained to Raghu as kindly as I could. "You see, cold weather is worse for those who have no houses or parents or soup and things So when there is an orphan, it is better that he should be out in the cold rather than in a warm place so that you can feel sorry for him" Actually, I'm quite proud of my literary training, I think my explanation was both clear and full

"Don't preach," snapped Raghu. "Just because you think you know a lot about literature and things like that. Just because."

"About this New Year business," I interrupted hastily, "what should we do about it?"

Raghu told me his plan I know, I know, I shouldn't have agreed I know it's foolhardy, idiotic, assbrained, bovine, tadpoleheaded to do what Raghu plans But this time, I was acting on principle. As I told you earlier, I have given great and serious thought to the New Year business and...

The first thing Raghu and I decided, was not to even acknowledge that it was

New Year, sorry, new year. When my mother asked about resolutions, I pretended I heard revolutions and talked at length on gravity, pressure and centrifugal force. Finally, she got so exasperated she gave up That was our first victory.

Actually, it was our only victory

That entire day, which was a holiday, we pretended that it was just an ordinary, everyday kind of day when people came bouncing up and said, "Happy New Year," we looked puzzled and asked, "What new year?" After a few times of this, they stopped saying it to us but continued saying it to each other with terrific enthusiasm

"It's no use," I told Raghu,
"we have to make our
position clear It's not that
we are against New Year but
we don't want to begin it
now, on the first of January It should begin sometime in April or May."

For once Raghu agreed with what I had to say. "Right, we have to do something," he said "Let's make posters"

As usual, we couldn't find any paper till Raghu suddenly remembered the brown paper we had got to cover our books for inspection in the third term. "Let's use that," he said, his eyes shining. "It would help our cause. Whoever heard of new brown paper cover for

the end of the year? We ought to cover our books only when they are new!"

The brown paper roll was enormous. We unrolled it and with a dark black crayon, we wrote across its length—

HAS NEW YEAR ARRIVED? NO! THIS IS NOT THE TIME

FOR NEW YEAR. THINK! JOIN OUR COURSE. MAKE NEW YEAR

ARRIVE LATER.

Then we carried the banner out and held it up between us, outside, on the pavement. Lots of people came to have a look. One old man asked whether there was any payment to be made

"Payment?" I asked him back

"For the course," he said Then for some reason, he laughed and walked off

In fact, many people laughed and patted us on our heads as if we were doing something clever

"This is not working either," I told Raghu across the banner. "We have to do something else."

"Of course it is working," said Raghu fiercely. "Lots of people are on our side now."

Suddenly, we heard some thousands of thunderous whispers and on the pavement opposite, came Raghu's sister Rita with about a hundred of her stupid friends. They had a banner too, a dirty, wriggly one, not at all like ours. They held it up, all crooked This is what was written on it.—

Ha! Ha! Ha! Of Course New Year Has Arrived. It Is 1993 Now. Hurrah For January One. Join Us One And All.

Not just that! Those thousands of girls also started shouting, "1993 Jindabad! 1993 Zindabad! Down with anti-social elements! Down! Down!"

At that moment, Raghu got really angry. He yanked our banner across the road, nearly yanking my arm off too "Hey you!" he shouted. "How dare you disturb us? How dare you?"

"It's a free country," shouted back Rita. "And anyway this is a democracy."

"Yes, it's a democracy," yelled another girl with a voice as shrill as Rita's. "So we can demonstrate."

"We can also write banners," shouted another one. "You think only you can? Our banner is much better."

"And anyway," shrieked Rita. "Mummy and Aunty are looking for the brown paper. And looking for you!"

That was it! The end of our plans. It was the brown paper that finished us. We were humbled and humilated and made to look small and unglorious. We were made to write 1993 in all our notebooks How did heroes manage in the old days? How were rebels supported?

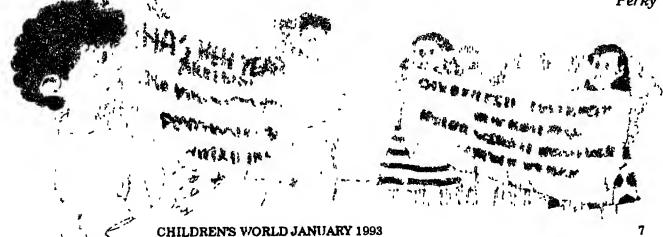
"We won't even have a street named after us," said Raghu bitterly.

"No," I said and sighed.

"All the calendars say 1993.

We have lost."

Sigh Yours with a lost loss, Perky





THE REPORT OF THE PARTY OF THE

STANDARD:

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TIME:

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PERTH - 8 P.M., SYDNEY - 10 P.M.

• MEMBER OF

U.N.O. :



• TYPE OF

GOVERNMENT:

NOV. 1, 1945:



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99 %

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BRISBANE - ST. HELENA ISLAND

NATIONAL DAY:



JANUARY 26. (AUSTRALIAN DAY.)



Text: O.P. Bhagat Illustrations: R.Ashish Bagchi

Everywhere, and in every age, men have told stories. So did the Maoris of New Zealand before the Europeans went there.

The Maoris and other aboriginal tribes of Australia are still there And they still tell their age-old tales.

As they had no writing, these people just told their yarns, or they sang and danced them. The stories were handed down the generations by word of mouth

All early people told stories of how the world began, where they came from and how the many things in nature happened. They also told the tales of their heroes. So did the Aborigines of Australia

Such stories are called myths and legends. In a way, the old Australian stories are like the old stories elsewhere. Yet they are different For Australia is a different world.

It is the land of strange animals like the kangaroo, goanna and platypus. Then it has the flightless bird emu. There is the equally curious bird, kiwi, of New Zealand too

The curved stick, boomerang, which can be thrown so that, if it does not hit anything, it comes back to the thrower, is an invention of the Australian tribes.

About these and the many other things they saw around them are the Australian myths and legends. About the sky and the earth is the story retold here



In the beginning, the earth and the sky were not as now. They stuck to each other. And all around was darkness.

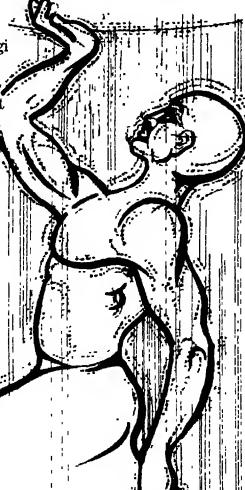
Papa the earth and Rangi the sky had many children. As time passed, the children, who were gods got weary of the unending gloom. They decided to do something about it.

Tu Matawenga was the fiercest of them all. He suggested that they kill Papa and Rangi. Only that way would the dark ness be banished.

But Tanay Mahoot, the god of the forests, argued

others igored what he said.

So the struggle began to separate Papa and Rangi.



against killing their parents. He advised their separation.

All agreed to this—all except Tafiri Ma Teya, the god of storms But the

The first to try was Rongo Ma Tanay, the god of crops But he failed.

After him Tangaroa, the god of the oceans, made an

effort, but in vain. Then was the turn of Tikitiki, the god of wild berries. Again to no purpose.

Even Tu Matawenga, the fiercest of the gods, met with no success.

Now Tanay Mahoot got up. He planted his feet on earth and set his shoulders against the sky. He heaved and his parents were torn apart.

He exerted more. The sky went higher and higher, and the earth deeper and deeper.

Then there was daylight. In the light they saw the many people born to Papa and Rangi, but who had remained hidden so far.

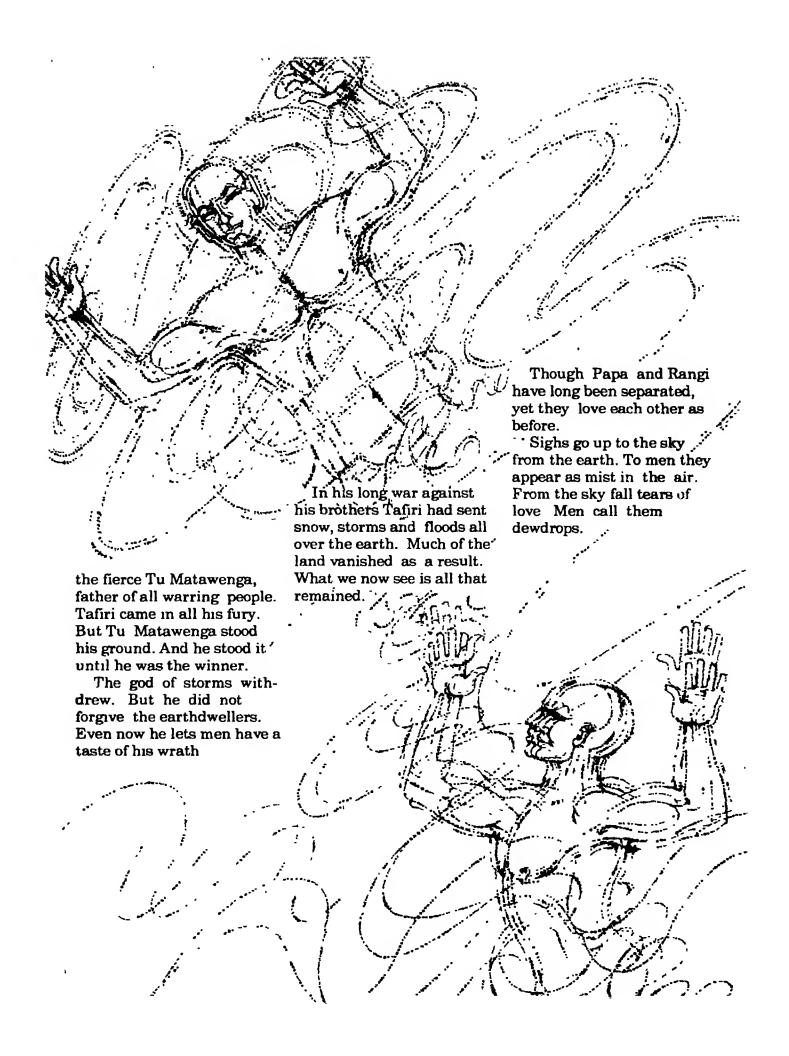
Tafiri, the god of storms, did not like this. He vowed to take revenge He hated the bright and beautiful things on earths. So he went up to live in the sky. His father welcomed him.

Together they sent clouds and storms and whirlwinds below. The storms struck the forests of Tanay Mahoot. All the trees were uprooted.

Then the avengers unleashed their fury on the sea. High waves rolled all over its surface. In dread the god Tangaroa fled to its depths.

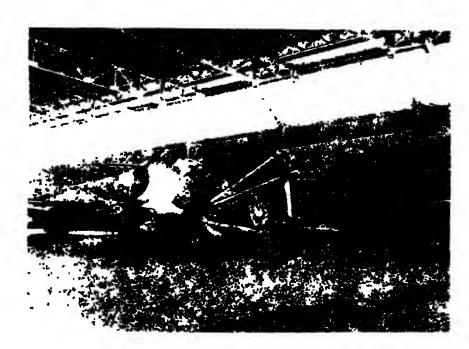
After that the still furious Tafiri attacked Rongo Ma Teya, the god of crops, and Tikitiki, the god of wild berries. But Papa the earth saved both so that mankind did not suffer for lack of food.

Tafiri's next target was



THE PRODE OF THE INDIANAIR FORCE

Photographs contract An Force Museum



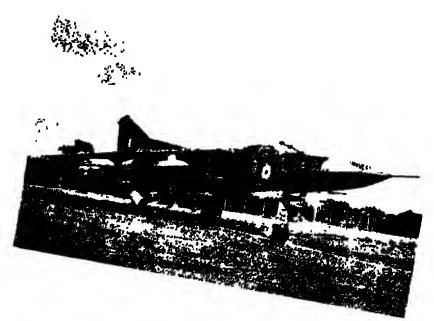
Y eyes went up as an Indian Airlines flight took off from the nearby domestic terminal of the Delhi airport. But the guard at the gates of the Air Force museum was hardly bothered. As he

said later, he couldn't be craning his neck towards the sky every two minutes.

The Air Force museum in New Delhi is set in an extremely serene atmosphere and one instantly feels transported to a different world surrounded all over by gleaming aircraft of all shapes and sizes

The museum, established in 1967, is the only such dedicated museum in India and amongst the very few in Asia. Located on Palam Colony Road, it houses a rare collection of memorabilia from Indian Military aviation history. The Indian Air Force celebrated its Diamond Jubilee (60 years) on October 8, 1992. The museum has an expansive hangar and an annexe divided into three sections.

The first section contains a photographic history of the Indian Air Force (IAF) from its early days in Risalpur (now in



Pakistan). Photographs of all chiefs of Air Staff too are displayed That includes the last British chief, Air Marshal Sir Gerald Gibbs Stamps released on the Air Force too are prominently displayed as are photographs of many aircraft "the pride of the IAF", Mirage 2000 or Vajra, II-76 or Gajraj, MIG-29 or Baaz et al

The second section contains photographs of decorated IAF officers during World War II. Some arms captured during operations in 1965 and 1971 and ceremonial awards presented to former Chiefs of Air Staff are also displayed Uniforms worn by the Hawai Sepoys, Air Force Officers in the thirties and uniforms from the sixties onwards are also on show

The third section contains information on important facets of aviation history Photographs, mementoes and a model of the Indo-Soviet jointly manned spaceship (Soyuz T-II) are on display Rakesh Sharma, India's first man in space, and his two colleagues of the erstwhile Soviet Union beam with pride in a corner

The third section also has a Roll of Honour of those officers and men who made the supreme sacrifice during the Kashmir operations in 1947-48, Chinese aggression in 1962 and Indo-Pak conflicts of 1965 and 1971. Also included are a number of letters written by top government and military officials.

The main hangar houses 15 different types of aircraft that have formed the backbone of the IAF since its inception. On show are aircraft, like the Hunter



CHILDREN'S WORLD JANUARY 1993

(with a maximum speed of 1150 kmph in a shallow dive) which was used in the police action in Goa in 1961 In the Indo-Pak conflicts of 1965 and 1971, it took heavy toll of Pakistani tanks in Longowal in Rajasthan, set ablaze oil tanks near Karachi and undertook deep penetration missions In 1981, it was selected to form the IAF's aerobatic team — the famous thunderbolts

Others on display are the Dakota which, in 1947, was landed by Air Commodore Mehar Singh for the first time on a clearing at Leh to evacuate refugees The Spitfire used in the 1947 operations as well as the French Toofani, the second jet fighter to be inducted into the IAF, are the other meior attractions

The wreet age of a Pakistani ai. aft is displayed proudly but strangely enough in a



secluded corner. The statue of Flying Officer Nirmaliit Singh Sekhon who fought heroically in 1971, towers magnificently. Srinagar was attacked by sıx Pakıstan Sabre jets and the airfield was bombed Despite mortal danger to him, Sekhon took off in a Gnat aircraft and engaged two of the enemy aircraft destroying them But more Sabres came and he was outnumbered He was awarded the Param Vir Chakra posthumously.

There are plans for expansion of the Air Force museum with the addition of an auditorium and some more hangars. It is also proposed to set up a museum at all the commands of the Air Force. Till then. the Air Force museum in the capital shall continue to hold its place of pride.



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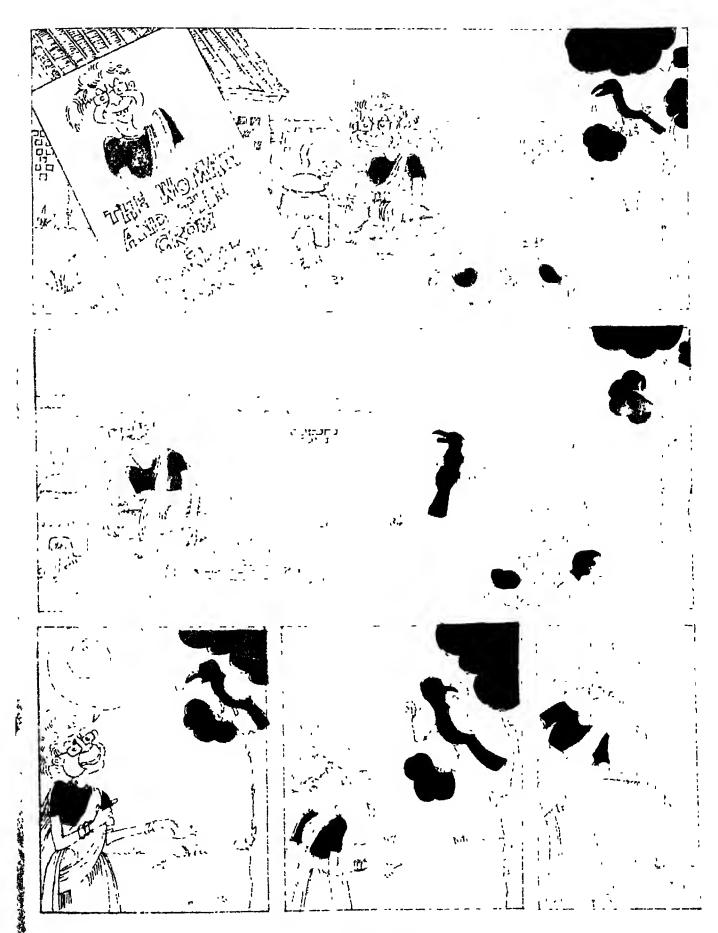
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CHILDREN'S WORLD JANUARY 1993



CHILDREN'S WORLD JANUARY 1993



CHILDREN'S WORLD JANUARY 1993



Story: Vinita Agarwal Illustrations: Chaitali Chatterjee

AMAN came running from the bus stop.
His school bag dangled from his right shoulder, ready to be flung down. But at the gate he stopped. There was no one at the doorstep waiting for him.

"Thank God," he heaved a sigh of relief. Mother must have gone to the market, or next door He took a quick look around. Ashu and Ravi his classnutes, were a few metres behind He knew they called him 'sissy' and 'mother's boy' behind his back because his mother . always waited for him outside when he returned from school and kissed him. Today he'd show them. He put his arm through the other loop of the satchel and shrugged it in place. Ashu and Ravi were now some two feet away. Slowly but surely Raman walked up to the door. He did not turn round but he could feel their stares on his back. He knew that

the bell was out of his reach but nevertheless he stretched out his hand towards it. With one foot he kicked the door open as he had seen Anuj, who lived next door, do Quickly, he

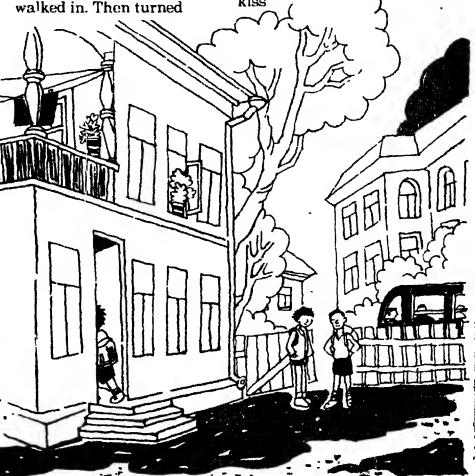
round just in time to see his two classmates move on.

He threw down the satchel and kicked off his shoes

"Mama.. Mama...," he cried impatiently. True, he did not want her waiting outside because no one's mother did but the idea of mother not waiting for him at all, irritated him.

"Here," Mama's weak voice came through her bedroom door Raman's heart skipped a beat. Something was wrong with dear Mama He rushed into her room. She was lying on the bed looking quite pale

"Back from school?" she slowly pulled him towards her and gave him a light



"What happened? Are you ill?" he asked.

"Yes, the doctor says its rheumatism," she replied.

Raman didn't know what that long word meant but he understood it was serious. He had never seen his mother lying down before like this. He felt tears stinging his eyes.

"Will you be all right, Mama?"

"But of course, Raman. Now go and have your lunch. It's on the table."

He did not want to leave her but he also did not want her to see him cry. Papa said "Brave people don't cry." He quietly left the room.

Mama was still ill when Papa had to go on a tour.

"I will stay with you, Mama," Raman insisted. He mind was whirling, looking was determined and nothing his parents said could make him change his mind. Didn't Mama give him food, medicines and kisses when he was ill? Surely he could not leave her alone when she needed him.

Most of the time he sat across the room playing with the toys or reading comics. Whenever he caught her looking at him, he ran up to her. "Can I get you something, Mama?" At night he prayed to God to make her well again 'I'll do anything to see Mama well again," he vowed with set face and clenched fists.

"Raman," one day Mama called him, "will you please go to the market for me?."

"Yes, Mama," he replied, eager to be of some help.

"I need some vegetables. Raman, get some paper and a pencil and write them down."

"Vegetables? Oh no!" Raman was horrified. The grocer's shop was on the way to the playground and clearly visible from there. Ashu, Ravi and all the other boys would be playing there. They would make fun of him. How they would laugh. No, he would never go there. But then, he could not say no to his mother when she was sick. Reluctantly, he got paper and pencil. As she listed the names and quantities of vegetables, he dutifully wrote them down but his for an excuse.

"Mama, I have a lot of school work to catch up with," he complained.

"That's all right. Never mind the vegetables," Mama closed her eyes in pain.

Raman felt like kicking himself. He had failed Mama when she needed him most. He was worried and sad. He stared blankly at his books without reading a word. He had told Mama such wonderful stories of his bravery and today when he had vowed he would do anything for her, he was behaving like a coward.

Absent-mindedly he kicked the ball. It struck the wall and came to him on the rebound. He kicked it

several times with the same result. He picked up the ball and squeezed it hard. The moment he removed the pressure it came back to its normal size. Unlike him, it was brave, it withstood all problems.

'Mama is ill and for her sake you can't stand the jibes of your friends?' Raman scolded himself.

He took a deep breath and tied his laces. "I'm going to play," he told her. "I'll be back soon."

On his way out, he picked up the money his mother had kept and the slip of paper. At the gate he looked right and left. None of his friends were in sight. He sped to the grocer's. When he reached there his face was flushed scarlet.

"Um Um.." he muttered breathlessly.

"What do you want?" asked the grocer.

Raman tried to read from the paper but was too breathless.

"Uh uh..." he gasped. "Give it to me," said the grocer taking the paper from Raman's hand.

As he weighed the vegetables, Raman kept a look out for his friends.

He spied one of his friends coming towards the shop with his mother. Quickly, he ducked behind the wooden boxes and held his breath.

"Come out at once," cried the grocer.

Raman shut his eyes

hoping he would not be pulled out. His knees were shaking.

"What's the matter with you?" the grocer's voice boomed in Raman's ears.

Raman knew it was useless hiding Slowly he crept out from behind the boxes. He did not have the courage to look around. What fun the boys would make of him now. If only mother had not sent him to buy vegetables

The grocer handed him his packets "Fifty rupees," he said.

Raman hastily pulled out a note and took the vegetables. He still had a hundred rupees left as he trudged home He was feeling sick inside

The moment he opened the door, he saw the ball. He set down the vegetable basket and gave the ball a kick with all his might. The ball crashed into the wall, came back and hit him

"Slam," the chair next to him fell and Raman on top of it

"Raman," his mother cried from the bedroom

"Yes," replied Raman picking himself up.

"What is happening?"

"Nothing, I was just playing." He sat on the chair looking at the ball. Then slowly, he walked into Mama's bedroom.

"Mama..." he said looking down and smoothing her

bedsheet.

asneet. "Yes?" "Do you need anything?"
"No, child."

He kept standing beside her silently.

"What happened, didn't you play cricket today?" she asked.

"No, I got the vegetables."

"Thank you," she smiled at him and her face which was creased with pain, lit up.

Raman felt as though he was floating in air. To think that he had been afraid of doing such a small thing for Mama. His dearest Mama. If only she would get well soon. He looked at her as if for the first time. His eyes full of love and pride that he had done something for her. It was then he noticed her faded nightig. It hurt him

right through his heart.

Ashu's mother wore such beautiful clothes. But his Mother was so lovely. If only she had beautiful clothes too. She would look like a queen. His fingers felt the hundred rupee note in his pocket.

"I'll get it for her," he muttered.

"Where are you going now?" his mother asked.

"I'll be back in a moment," he replied.

Confidently and proudly he walked to the market thinking of the lovely pink nightie with beautiful lace which he had often seen his mother admire but had not bought. He walked up to the counter.





show me that pink dress in the showcase" he asked the shopkeeper

A bit surprised to find a ten-year-old ask for a nightic, the shopkeeper nevertheless placed it in front of Raman

"Wnat size?" he asked.

Raman had never thought of the size

"This big," he indicated with his hands.

"Small?" asked the shopkeeper

"No, no," Raman said hurriedly "She's just the right size."

"I think you should find out first," the shopkeeper grinned. Raman looked around desperately for help He spied Ashu's mother Taking a deep breath, he skipped over to her

"Auntie," he nudged her.

"Yes?" she looked at him inquiringly

"Auntie, what size will fit Mama?"

"Are you buying her a dress?"

"Yes, that one."

"My, my," said Ashu's mother, "What a thoughtful child. Come I'll help you."

With the parcel under his arm, Raman walked home His heart already full of the joy his mother would feel. He saw his father's car parked outside.

"Hello," his father, greeted him "And what has our young man here?"

"It's for Mama," said Raman proudly. He took it to her room with father close behind. She was lying in bed.

"Mama, please get up and see this," Raman switched on the light

His mother sat up in bed as he eagerly pulled out the dress.

"Oh my!" his father exclaimed.

His mother was silent.

"Don't you like it, Mama?" Raman said, worried. "Why are you crying?"

"These are tears of joy my son," she hugged him close "I am so happy, I feel I am well again. It was very thoughtful of you son, but don't make it a habit of spending a huge sum out of the vegetable money!"



at the Modern School grounds at 10 30 a m on November 8, an hour too late to participate in the Shankar's On-the-Spot Painting Competition Her uncle, not wanting to disappoint her, sat Nitya down in the vast grounds and told her to draw Happily she drew and painted, unaware that she was not participating in the competition

Now Nitya is waiting for her prize

There were not many like Nitya who could not participate in this year's Shankar's On-the-Spot Competition Judging by the hordes of children well-settled in their places by 9 o'clock, they must have been up early to be able to reach the venue at the appointed hour

The children kept arriving, in their uniforms or in
their best clothes, carrying
their drawing materials, accompanied by teachers,
parents, neighbours, aunts,
uncles, cousins Even
though more space had been
taken this year, the enclosures were bursting with
children sitting close
together

The competition began at 9 30 a m. The three age groups into which the children were divided, were each given some subjects to draw from They could draw more than one, too The topics for the 5-8-year-olds were 'My Family', 'My School Teacher', 'At the Park', 'At the Zoo', and 'My Favourite Toy'; for the 9-12-year-olds 'Shopping with Mother', 'Puppet Show', 'Climbing Trees', 'Circus',



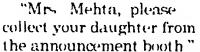
'Beautiful Earth', and 'At the Swimming Pool', and for the 13-16-year-olds 'Earth - A Living Forest?', 'Shopping Centre', 'Traffic Jam', 'Peanut Seller', 'Children's Rally', and 'Boating' The competition closed at 1 p m

The youngest finished first - some even half an hour after the competition began Though the valuous subjects were explained, some children needed to have the topics read out to them, being too young to read for them'selves Even after all that one would often be asked, "Can I draw a butterfly (or whatever)?"

"Mummy," some wailed, unwilling to sit and draw

"Where are the children of my school?" another would ask, eyes full of tears

As the sun crept higher in the sky, the scene at the announcement booth became slightly chaotic











Calling Maitrey: Menon's mother, wherever she is "

"Where is the 'hello-hello' man?" a child asked a volunteer in a trembling voice

"I think my school bus has left without me," declared another trying to be brave

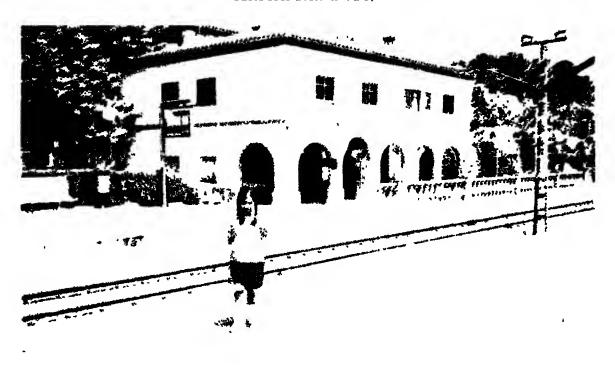
"Don't worry, we'll have someone drop you home," was the reassurance given.

With the closing time of the Competition approaching, a small crowd of anxious parents and weeping children gathered around the announcers, each trying to locate his own Though you knew, in the end, all would be well, nevertheless the tension at the announcement booth was palpable And as each child and parent found one another, the atmosphere vased

At last, all that was left was a sprawling field, empty tents, bits of paper blowing about in the breeze, the trees and the grass witness to this annual incomparable mela, waiting for the next round the following year



Text and photographs: Karna Basu (14)



S WE looked out of the window, small, geometrical shapes in different colours appeared before us. As we descended. we slowly began to see acres of agricultural fields, vividly coloured. A smooth bump told me that we had landed in Paris. It was then that I saw an elevating bus for the first time A seemingly normal bus came up to our plane, elevated itself on something like a highly magnified jack, and attached itself to the plane door. After the passengers entered it, the bus went through the

natural juices and preserved in a fossilised form

Upon exiting from the airport, my father's friend, a Spanish university professor, met us and took us to his car After rather overloading his boot, he, in his absent-minded style, tried to slam down the hood by exerting all his force on one end of it. After finally getting the boot shut, he started the car before my mother had entered it'l knew I was going to enjoy iny stay here!

We were taken directly to our residence which was

outdoor section, a typically Spanish activity. Just outside the hotel was the quaint Bellatera station which was meant only for the interior Barcelona lines. The breakfast that we got every morning was a little unusual but certainly quite filling. It consisted of milk, a slice of bread, jam, and ten biscuits (just like the Indian 'Marie' biscuits)

My father was visiting the Universitat Autonoma de Barcelona, which, from the hotel was a 20 minute winding walk or a one minute ride by the shuttle



same process in reverse and took us to the main Charles de Gaulle Airport terminal Our final destination was to be Barcelona and we had to change planes in Paris

Barcelona Airport is a brand new glass structure that had been created for the Olympics. There are magnificent palm trees growing inside the building and a beautiful landscape outside, too But the palm trees are now slowly dying because they cannot withstand the temperature of the interior of the airport. That is why they are now going to be pumped out of their

a small, charming, typically Spanish hotel called Sant Pancrac, just outside the city in a small town called Bellatera The four of us were split into two rooms. each of which had a large window covered by wooden shutters Each room was also adjoined by a large balcony The scene from there was resplendent—the tree-blanketed Pyrenees mountains in the background and greenery all around us The restaurant of the hotel was dark and dingy with tinted glass, and there were old men chatting and drinking beer for long hours in the

train The whole university is run in Spanish There are buildings surrounded by sloping fields where the students sit and study.

The next afternoon, my mother, sister, and I decided to go to Sant Cugat, two stops away on the line of Placa Catalunya, where we were told we could get all our groceries When we entered Bellatera station to buy tickets, we had a most amusing talk with the man at the counter. After a long conference, the common words between the two languages were discovered, and we got our tickets. We got in to a classified com-



partment in which people without special passes are only allowed to stand. At the next stop, Sant Joan, a group of school students boarded our compartment and sat on the handles, leaned on the backrest, and in short, utilised every advantage of the compartment except directly sitting on the seat!

Sant Cugat is a beautiful small town with narrow cobbled streets and old buildings that have protruding balconies with iron railings. The afternoon siesta is worth mentioning. At that time, the only inhabitants of Sant Cugat seemed to be a few old men gossiping on a street bench

The Spanish are a very friendly people. After having walked along one of the inner roads for quite a long time, my mother spotted a food-store and excitedly raised her hand to point at it. Confirming my statement at the beginning of this paragraph, the man sitting outside it waved back just as

heartily! On finding the shop closed, we decided to walk around the town for a short while and then check up on the shop once more With the passing time, more and more people started emerging on the streets Some of the streets were meant exclusively for walking where there were ladies, children, etc chatting and browsing in little shops. It was clear that this was their main entertainment of the day After walking for a while we returned to the shop, bought our food, and went back to our hotel.

From what I had seen of the Spaniards so far, I had noticed a very peculiar characteristic about them. Whenever they want to show any kind of expression, especially that of puzzlement, it always includes the raising of their eyebrows and shoulders simultaneously So, every once in a while I would see a Spaniard with a questioning look on his face, and ele-

vated eyebrows and shoulders.

The next day, Tuesday, my father was free, so we planned to leave fairly early in the morning for Central Barcelona. When it comes to punctuality, our family never manages to tick together. So, it was finally 1.00 pm when we boarded the train for Placa Catalunva at the beautiful Bellatera station. One of the most picturesque stations on the line is La Floresta, It consists of a small ticket office surrounded by pillars and arches, and with varieties of flowered creepers growing all over the office. The eleventh stop is Placa Catalunya, an underground stop in the heart of Barcelona.

The hustle-bustle of life burst upon us just when we exited the station. We started walking down the Rambla which is the main avenue of Barcelona. Half of the road is meant for walking and it is always full of people of all ages, tourists, pigeons, and pickpockets. The Spaniards are very happy-go-lucky people and that was very evident in the relaxed atmosphere of the Rambla. There were many roadside stalls trying to sell anything ranging from newspapers to noisy birds. We stopped at an open-air restaurant to have a light Spanish lunch. Seafood is the main element of Spanish meals. The most famous Spanish dish is Paella. which is a kind of pulao with prawns, octopuses, squids, among other things. After walking along the Rambla for a while, my father suggested that we take one of the off-going inner roads and visit the Picasso museum. The renowned artist. Pablo Picasso was born in Spain and this museum had a very beautiful collection of paintings by him Before returning to our hotel, we stopped at a large square to have tea 'There were some fountains, a few beautiful lamp-posts, and people sitting and conversing in cafes

One day we went out to see some structures designed by Antoni Gaudi, the most famous Spanish architect He is known for his highly unusual 'melting' structures.

The first building we saw was Casa Battlo. It has a colourful exterior with long windows, and a wave-like roof and balconies. Our next stop was Casa Mila, a dark coloured residential building. This has strangely beautiful balconies that are made out of scrap iron strips. It was after this that we saw the most magnificent structure of them all—the Sagrada Familia. It is a massive church with four large spires looming into the sky. There are many carvings and statues on the walls. Narrow, dark and dingy steps lead up to different levels The construction of the Sagrada Familia was not completed when Gaudi died and he did not even leave any format plans for the rest of the cathedral. Present-day

architects are now trying to visualise and build what they think he had in mind for the remaining part of the structure.

One late evening we were returning after a tour of the Olympic Village which conneided with the time when Bancelons won the interior Spanish Football Champronshup The finals had been bosted by Barcelona and so the roads were filled with the overjoved Barceloniana There were people softing on the tops of cars screaming away: cars were continuously homking im thythau, the slightly eccentric cituzens were dranking without rest. and all was merry At that time we were unawant of the cause of the celebration, but nevertheless we joined in the hondering and, dive to the slow tradific, we got to the hotel quite late.

On the last Saturday that we had in Barcelona, we rented a car and travelled northwards for about one and a half hours and stopped at a town called the Girona. Spanish highway speeds are one of the fastest in the world. The speed limit is normally 140 kilometres per hour and even the slowest traffic does. not go below 90 kmphi. So even though Girona was a fairly long distance away from Biancelona, we did not feel it. Girone is a very dit town with a river flowing through it (somewhat diseaser



CHILDREN'S WORLD JANUARY 1993

and grander than the part of the Yamuna that flows through Delhi)! We parked the car and walked to a recommended cathedral. On our way, a friendly stallkeeper, seeing that we were outsiders, gave us a free map which would otherwise have cost us some money The cathedral was very majestic and there were 90 steps leading up to it But, what was even more charming were its surroundings There are hilly roads with

old houses on them My father and I walked through a dark passageway and came out onto a path with small buildings on both sides There are tiny bridges supported by arches to get from one house to another And with the few streaks of sunlight falling on the houses, the scene was unforgettable Before returning to our car, we stopped at a small cafe to refresh ourselves and have a drink When I entered the toilet, I just happened to glance out

of the window and the most scenic picture met my eyesthe river, glistening in the sunlight, was flowing directly past the building, and on the other side were old, ramshackle buildings with old ladies drying clothes and children playing about Our drive back was along the sea coast and the few thin trunked, thick topped trees on some hills in the background could have passed off as a Salvador Dali canvas.

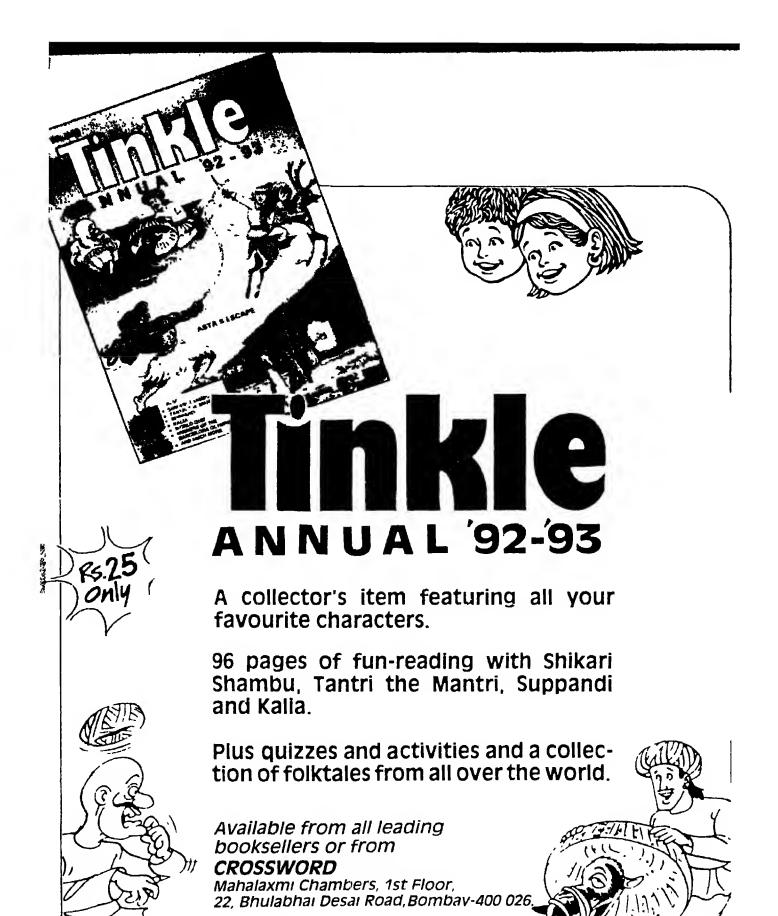
CHILDREN OF THE WORLD

Are all children like me
In lands far away? The question comes when I,
by day at school or play;
Or at night upon my bed I lie.
Nobody ever seems to mind,
No one ever seems to bother
When I try to find No one but my kind old mother.
She says, "There are children like me
In many lands near and over sea,
Some live happily some are sad
Many are very thin and a few awfully fat.
Some wear fine clothes, some wear a single vest,
Many have beautiful garments, some bare

Many have beautiful garments, some bare open chests,

For some no chair upon which to sit; For many no food on the table to eat. Some have fathers flying in air, Many are doctors, teachers and engineers But others are sweeper, cobbler and beggar. And then those with no one to take care." In many different places they happen to be It would be nice if I could see And come to know each other -"It's not possible," says my mother. I want to visit and meet them all; In any strange place they may happen to be Of every country in the world -But my mother says its not possible! We the children from rich and poor Are brothers and sisters after all; There should be a feeling of family hood Spread over every part of the world.

Raj Kumar Rai



Published by India Book House Pvt. Ltd.

The Gold Chain These

Story: Vandana Kumari Jena Illustrations:B.G.Varma

ONDAY was usu ally rather unpopular with Rishi It followed Sunday, the day of rest, relaxation and recreation Monday meant getting up early for school It meant having a long week ahead But Monday, the sixth of July, was different. It was his birthday His parents, had of course, proposed that he celebrate it on Sunday itself, for the sake of convenience Rishi was adamant, he wasn't born on the fifth, so why celebrate it on that day? For this irrefutable logic, his parents had no answer

The day dawned bright and clear. Rishi dressed with pride in his new clothes and shoes, clutching the huge packet of chocolate eclairs his mother had given him to distribute in class It had taken all his persuasive powers to get her to agree to buy eclairs instead of the toffee that she normally purchased. Strutting about like a peacock, Rishi was very pleased with life until he entered the classroom and saw Varun, the new boy

In his class It was Varun's birthday, too. He was wearing an inappropriate and very expensive silk suit. Worse still, he had round his neck, a necklace of gold

"It's made of pure gold It weighs 10 tolas." Varun, the son of a jeweller, was holding the class

spellbound with his narration. "My parents gave it to me for my birthday."

"How much does it cost?" asked his curious classmates.

"Guess," countered Varun.

Speculation ran high at this point. The ten-and eleven-year-olds quoted wildly inappropriate amounts, ranging from ten thousand rupees to one lakh

Rishi thought of the watch his own parents had gifted to him, which had seemed a luxury at that moment but which now paled in comparison

"Hey Rishi what did you get for your birthday?" asked Vimal, his best friend

For a moment Rishi thought of lying, but then lifted his hand silently

"Wow, it's a real beauty And useful too Now you won't leave your answer sheets incomplete," Vimal teased gently

His genuine praise uplifted Rishi's sagging spirits considerably. Yet a blight had been cast on the birthday.

As the class tracher approached the classroom Varun was advised by students to tuck the gold chain into his shirt. Reluctantly, he agreed to do so Rishi's attention was not on the lesson. It was on what goodies Varun hid brought to distribute in class. To him it was a foregone conclusion that his eclairs would fail miserably in comparison.

By the time recess was announced, Rishi's curiosity had become insatiable Finally he could contain himself no longer. He went up to Varun and asked him

"Whatever it is, you can



never hope to match it," sneered Varun.

Rishi flared up and would have hit Varun, unmindful of the consequences, if Vimal had not dragged him away in time. Varun flashed a hundred rupee note and in no time his classmates swarmed around him He treated them all to ice-creams

"Money speaks," Vimal said contemptuously.

But Rishi, still smouldering with anger, was looking at Varun whose gold chain was being fingered longingly by his classmates.

"Baba," said a peon to

Varun, "you mustn't wear such expensive things to school, someone may be tempted to steal it."

Varun merely laughed. After recess, when the class reassembled, the teacher asked them to sing "Happy Birthday" to the birthday boys. Thereafter they were asked to distribute sweets. As Rishi had feared, his chocolate eclairs paled in comparison. Varun had brought, for each child, a gift set containing a pencil, eraser, sharpener, ruler, gum bottle and a small pair of scissors. It must have cost a mini-fortune, Rishi suspected. He found little satisfaction when the class

teacher reprimanded him for bringing such expensive gifts for distribution.

"Look at Rishi That is how any sensible child would celebrate his birthday," he said.

Varun merely smirked The children started giggling Rishi knew that no one agreed with the teacher's views

In the hour that followed Rishi was conscious of the fact that while every classmate lovingly fingered the gift sets, no one except Vimal touched his chocolate eclairs

'If only I had celebrated my birthday at home yesterday,' he thought Even the thought of the birthday party later at home provided little consolation, for he had learnt that Varun was celebrating it in a hotel

At last the bell rang and school was over. Complete pandemonium prevailed as boys streamed out of their classes shouting and sliding down banisters, pushing each other to get out of the school gates The school buses were lined outside the school gate Children were milling around the buses and some parents, ayahs and domestic servants were holding the hands of the tiny children under their care and taking them home. Rishi couldn't spot his bus As usual it was late He stood at a corner waiting for it Then a senior boy from his bus-stop appeared

"Rishi, I've left my water bottle in class. Please hold my hockey stick while I run to get it."

Rishi felt honoured, for the boy was the hockey captain in school He held the stick with pride.

'If only,' he thought vengefully, 'I could put the stick round Varun's neck and pull'

The next moment itself he was ashamed of his thoughts. Then he saw Varun appear before him. He was looking for the school bus. Varun's bus was at the other end.

'It'll do his podgy little body a world of good to exercise it occasionally,' he



thought unkindly

Rishi smiled to himself when he saw that the first step of the bus was too high and Varun was finding it difficult to climb in But then a good samaritan appeared from somewhere

'Must be a domestic servant,' thought Rishi, as he saw the man lift Varun by his waist and deposit him into the bus

It happened so suddenly that for a moment Rishi didn't realise what was happening Varun had turned round to thank the good samaritan, when suddenly, the man tugged at his gold chain and ran Varun, still reeling under the shock and clutching his bruised neck, could only stare silently as the thief sped away When he finally found his voice, there was total chaos Teachers came racing in Boys started shouting Rishi, standing at a distance, swirling the hockey stick wished he could be a hero and catch the thief. But the thief was lost in the crowd. For the first time that day, Rishi was not envious of Varun Rishi pitied him How furious his parents would be!

'But it was their own foolishness,' he thought 'Someone could have slit Varun's throat for the chain,' he mused. Lost in thought, he swung the hockey stick round and tripped a man rushing past The man went sprawling.



"I'm sorry," Rishi was about to mutter the conventional words of apology, when he thought he saw a flash of gold. Quick as lightning, he swung the hockey stick once again and caught his neck, just as he was on his feet. Bystanders had now congregated round them. Rishi prayed that his

hunch would prove correct. "Sir, will you go through his pockets?" he asked a school teacher. Like a conjuror producing a rabbit out of the hat, the teacher fished out the gold chain!

Rishi became a hero! He was taken back to school. His statement was recorded by the police. The principal

rang up his parents and congratulated them. A tearful Varun gave his heart-felt thanks. The episode became the topic of coversation at the birthday party. A local newspaper even covered the incident and published his photograph As Rishi went off to sleep at night, he decided that this was the nicest birthday he had had .-It was almost like an adventure of the Five Find Outers or Famous Five series written by Enid Blyton

The next day Rishi found himself the centre of attention. Even the normally stern class teacher bestowed a smile upon him. A little later, there was excitement in class. Varun's parents had arrived. They wanted to meet Rishi.

"We have a small present for you," they said, handing over a small box

Rishi opened the box excitedly. Nestling on blue velvet was a thin gold chain, a miniature of the one Varun had worn the day before For a moment, just for a moment, Rishi was sorely tempted to accept But the momentary weakness passed. He shook his head resolutely, and despite all their coaxing, did not change his mind They tried very hard, argued that it was not all that expensive, that it was meant as a token of thanks, that they could afford it and so on. But Rishi was resolute.

"It was my duty," he said when they insisted on showing their appreciation.

"I'm proud of you, my boy," said the class teacher when they had gone back, disappointed

"Money doesn't always speak, does it?" grinned

Rishi

"No," answered Vimal,
"But actions speak louder
than words." This oblique
reference to Rishi's prompt
action which prevented the
theft of the gold chain,
once again, brought a soft
glow to Rishi's face.



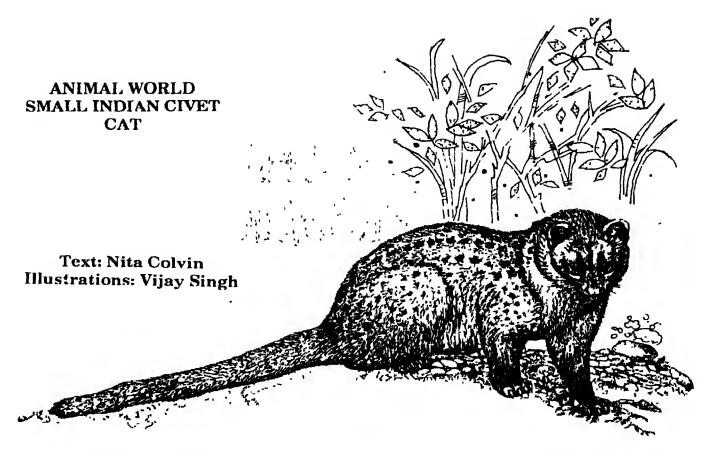
ENTERNATIONAL PRIENDSHIP SPORTS MEET



Children, Indian and foreign, participated in an International Friendship Sports Meet organised by Bluebells School, New Delhi. H.E. Dr. Khaled El-Sheikh, Ambassador P.L.O. was the chief guest at the function, where children of Bluebells School also gave a physical exercise display.

Mrs. Maneka Gandhi, former Minister for Environment and Forest, gave away the prizes.





INCE early times human beings have been acquainted with perfumes and have harvested animals as well as plants to wrap themselves in "sweetsmelling" odour While the musk deer has been hunted to the point of extinction for its musk, the civets which yield "civet", a base for perfumes, have also not been spared But in recent years, the use of synthetic substitutes has thankfully reduced the demand for these animals Non-feline cats

Although often referred

to as civet cats, civets are not cats. They belong to the same family as mongooses and genets, and have a long body with stumpy legs, a long tail and a pointed muzzle.

Civets resemble small cats in appearance, habits and pattern of their coat, but while cats are solely hunters, civets depend on vegetable food as well. In comparison to cats, their teeth are weak and their claws less powerful

Civets are among the most primitive of all carnivores. They inhabit the tropical forests of Asia and Africa. The civets found in India are the large Indian. Civet, Small Indian. Civet, Palm Civet, Spotted Linsang and Binturong.

The Small Indian Civet, Viverricula Indica, is tawny grey with the stripes on the back and rows of spots on its body. A crest of long black hair which runs along the back of the Large Indian Civet is absent in the Small Indian Civet.

A solitary and nocturnal animal, the Small Indian Civet eschews forests and prefers a habitat of long grass or scrub jungle. It nestles in holes or under rocks, or conceals itself in grass or bushes during the day. It scales a tree with perfect ease and can also swim in water. Though it may be caught napping in trees, it procures its food on the ground.

The Small Indian Civet and the common Palm Civet are the most adaptable of the civets. They stray into crowded towns and villages and take shelter in drain pipes on the roofs of houses They scrounge on poultry, rats and other smaller animals which thrive in these settlements.

Civets hunt in a manner similar to that of cats. They

pounce on the prey by surprise, stalking it stealthily But unlike cats, civets do not have rasping tongues to lick bones clean. Instead, like dogs they crush and swallow bones of the small animals they kill Civets eat rats, squirrels, insects, crabs, lizards, eggs, birds, snakes and fruit.

Chemical warfare

The teeth and claws of civets serve as weapons of defence The Small Indian Civet has another unique defence mechanism — its stink glands. It resorts to this means of "chemical warfare" when there is no other means of escape

In such a situation, the Small Indian Civet squirts a stream of yellow liquid from its anal glands onto the attacker. The acrid discharge is so nauseating and repelling that for a moment it blinds the enemy.

But before releasing the vile liquid, the Small Indian Civet dons a "mask" to warn its enemy. It bristles up the long dark hairs of the coat and crest and displays the light-coloured underfur.

Interestingly, the obnoxious fluid squirted by the small Indian Civet to drive off enemies is valued by humans to prepare special perfumes to attract the

opposite sex. Earlier, Small Indian Civets were kept in captivity for their fluid which was used as a base for perfumes and medicines.

The Small Indian Civets have a more important role to play in nature as scavengers and seed dispersers. Their varied diet helps reduce rat populations around cities, and in forests they help disperse seeds of fruit trees. By dispersing seeds to faraway places they contribute towards maintaining the biological diversity of forests. In a sense, these stink bombs of the forest are also tree conservators

HY me Ma^{on} Sushma asked sullenly "Why is it always I who have to be left behind?" She turned and glared angrily at Raju, munching unconcernedly on his rolled up paratha as the jam dripped from it on to his plate

Nina explained patiently, "My girl, I know it is your turn to accompany us, but the servants are on leave - only Brij will come to clean up - and you know Raju won't be able to manage on his own. Besides your cousins are boys and Raju would be better company for them than you would. Try and understand Sush, and you can have two trips in a row later, to make up for this."

Sushma didn't want to understand Ever since she could remember Naam had been staying with them and someone had always to be at home to keep her company. When Sushma and Raju had been small, their mother stayed back with them when Papa went on business trips where the family could.

tag along. But as they grew older and could be left behind, she had begun to accompany her husband and take one child in turn. This time, it was Sushma's turn to make the weekend trip to Bombay to pick up their cousins from abroad, but she had been passed over in favour of her younger brother and she was angry and resentful That her mother's explanation was logical made no difference to Sushma she was disappointed and she showed

On Saturday afternoon, when Nina, Jaideep and Raju set out on their three-hour drive to Bombay, Sushnia didn't even bother to go out and wave boodbye to them She stayed in Naani's room, reading through her Geography notes as Naani balanced her spectacles on her nose and sorted out the Diwali cards Raju had made a week earlier in his Craft classes

"Aren't you going to see your mother and father and brother off, Sushma?" Naani asked gently, looking at the girl's angry face as she tried to ignore the sounds of loading up and car doors banging

"Oh, they'll be back in two days," shrugged Sushma. 'T've said bye to them already Why should I stand outside for hours and watch all the last-minute bustle?"

Her grandmother said nothing but sighed sadly. Her conscience troubled her each time one of the children was left behind for her sake She wished that she were not so helpless as she lay on the couch, capable only of dragging herself to and from the toilet and for a short walk to the dining table for each meal. Years earlier a paralytic stroke had crippled her, leaving the left side of her body weak and almost useless From a bustling, active, elderly woman she had become helpless and dependent and it had taken a long time for her to come to terms with her infirmity Now she watched her fourteen year old granddaughter, so much like Nina at that age, and

kept her silence.

"Should I switch on the TV, Naani?" Sushma asked suddenly remembering that her grandmother liked the comforting sound of it far into the night, when there was no one for her to talk to

"Yes please, if you don't mind," *Naani* said, and Sushma felt a rush of guilt.

"Oh Naani," she cried and went and hugged her grandmother "I love being with you — you know that It's just that I get mad at Raju for having more chances than I do to travel about — and he's so smug about it! That makes me angrier still"

Tears pricked Naani's eyes. "I understand" she murmured, "I understand."

The afternoon sped by and when the Marathi news came on at 7.30, both of them turned to watch the screen

"A jailbreak has been reported in Pune" the announcer said solemnly, "and two of the convicted in the Premnath murder case are missing. One of the prison guards opened fire as the convicts made their bid for freedom, but he was overpowered by other inmates of the prison in what appears to be a well-planned escape bid, camouflaged as an uprising of the prisoners..."

Sushma and her grandmother looked at each other. "Oh dear..." said *Naani* worriedly. "We are so close to

the prison.."

"Don't worry, Naani,"
Sushma consoled her, trying not to let her own fear show.
"No escaped convict would like to come HERE We are so close to the prison that our house will be the first place the police will search for them Besides there's no point in hiding NEAR the prison It's better to run as far away as possible isn't it'"

"You're right!" said
Naani thoughtfully, but she could feel herself become light headed with anxiety, and the doctor had warned her so often to stay calm!

Sushma went and looked out of the window at the sprawling grounds around their bungalow. She had lived in this house as long as she could remember, and she loved the huge rooms, the old-fashioned fireplaces and the deep windows where she could sit and read a book comfortably She had run about, cycled and played hide and seek in the enormous compound and never thought that the banyan, peepal, neem and mango trees under which she'd held court with Raju and her friends could harbour snakes or spiders or - or criminals at large! It was her home, her haven, and she'd always been safe here. She'd never even felt lonely, although the upstairs portion of the house was unoccupied and their nearest neighbour was

almost a furlong away.
Being close to the Yerawada prison had never bothered her and the sirens she heard regularly only made her aware of the time of day—not of the life that existed within the high walls of the prison complex.

Now she shivered as she went to check all the doors. She realised that she was alone — the servant who stayed in the quarter at the bottom of the garden was away for a week and everything looked deserted and ghostly Something brushed against her legs and she gasped in fright She looked down

"Oh it's you, Fluffy! You scared me!"

She opened the door and let the cat out, knowing that he would climb in through the bathroom window as he usually did, when he had completed his nocturnal rounds.

Sushma heated the dinner and took it on a tray to Naani's room.

"Let's have a picnic here, Naani," she said and both of them ate silently as the TV programmes blared forth over them. Soon Sushma was yawning and quickly she cleared up, made sure the remote control was near Naani and got ready for bed.

Something awakened her in the early hours of the morning. Was it a thud she'd heard — or was it a moan? Sushma sat up in bed, recalling suddenly that



two convicted murderers had escaped from prison She listened for some time, but heard no sound

"Are they trying to break into our house? Or have they realised that the upstairs upartment is empty and have taken refuge there?"

She looked around for Fluffy but couldn't see him She didn't want to put on the light in her room and attract attention if there really were intruders about Noiselessly, she got out of bed and crept out of her bedroom By now her eyes were used to the darkness and she could see clearly into all the corners of each room

"Aah!" There it was again It sounded like someone in pain

"Oh no' Is Naani having an attack of some sort?"
Sushma rushed into
Naani's room, the light from the bathroom enabling her to check on her grand-inother without difficulty
She bent and listened — no, Naani's breath was even and she was sleeping peacefully

"Aah!" she heard again, louder and now she knew that there was someone in the building Someone was on the staircase outside Naani's room or else had somehow managed to get into the disused upstairs section

'I'll phone the Police,' Sushma thought, then checked herself. 'And what will I tell them? The noise could be from a stray cat of something" She racked her brains to think of who else she could phone 'I know! Uncle Suri is in the CRPF He'll know what to do even though he is far away from here' She lifted the receiver and held it to her ear There was no dial tone. She shook it and pressed the phone back onto the cradle. When she lifted it again there was still no sound. 'It's dead!' she thought and now she really felt alone and cut off from the world.

She consoled herself. 'Well, how would Uncle Suri have helped anyway? He's over ten km away at Ramtekdi. Would he have come dashing here because I heard some noises in the night?

She went back to her bed and lay down, dozing off and awakening each time with a start, knowing it was the moans that had disturbed her *Naani* remained asleep, her sleeping tablets and her slight deafness making her oblivious to the noise.

At six, Sushma rose, opened the front door quietly and crept upstairs, trying to be as silent as possible. She tried the door of the apartment and it opened slowly, creaking despite her care She stepped in and screamed as a hand caught hold of her leg.

"Quiet" a gruff voice said "Quiet, or you'll be sorry!"

She looked down at the man seated on the floor by the door, a blood-soaked cloth wound round his thigh. His eyes were glazed with pain and he looked as if he'd fall unconscious at any moment, but he held a wicked looking knife in his hand and she knew he wouldn't hesitate to use it

Sushma pretended she didn't know who he was "Who are you?" she cried. "How have you hurt yourself? Let me help you!"

The convict stared at her for a long moment then let go of her leg and slid the knife out of sight

"Did you cut yourself?"
Sushma went on "You're
bleeding so much. I'll call a
doctor..."

"No doctor," he growled "Just tie something tight above the wound and I'll be okay." She turned and he grabbed her leg in a surprisingly strong grip again.
"Mind—no tricks. I know you're alone with the old woman I came up here so I can come down again Any funny business and the old woman gets it." Sushma nodded.

So he knew that she was alone with Naani. He must have watched them from the window. And he was confident that she wouldn't telephone for help, so obviously he was responsible for the telephone being dead. But he didn't know that Brij would come to clean the house at 830 - and even as she thought that. she realised it was Sunday and Brij's weekly day off What can I do?' she thought, her mind racing 'I can't run out for help because that will leave Naani at his mercy. And I must not tell Naani about this because she'll panic She must stay calm'

She went to the medicine cabinet and peered inside She pulled out a few bandages and some Dettol. She couldn't think of anything else. Then suddenly a thought struck her She tiptoed to Naani's bedside table and looked at the small plastic tray of medicines kept there Quickly she helped herself. then went to the kitchen and got a jug of water and a glass. Carefully, she carried everything upstairs.

The door was open wide and the man was waiting. He had been watching to see that she didn't run out of the house. I could have gone from any other door,' she thought, 'but it would not have helped I suppose, because I'd have to use the gate and he gets a clear view of it from here.'

She handed him a glass of water and he swallowed it thirstily. "Food," he demanded. "Get me some food."

"In a while," she said softly "Let me first dress your wound" She knelt down and made to untie the crude bandage on his thigh, but he pushed away her hand, not wanting her to see that it was a bullet wound, not wanting her to know just how seriously injured he was.

"You go and get the food.
I'll do this myself." Sushma
hesitated. "Go on — get
going. What are you hanging
about for?"

"It will take some time..." she began

"See that it doesn't," he snarled back, "or I'll be visiting you downstairs."

Sushma scrambled to her feet and went down the stairs. She touched her pocket. 'Why didn't I knock him out? I can get a knife and stab him. I can hit him on the head. What's wrong with me? What am I waiting for?' When she reached downstairs, Naani was awake and calling for her.

"Where have you been my girl?" she asked when Sushma entered, her face flushed

"I'd gone out looking for Fluffy — he hasn't been in all night," she said "I'll get your milk," she added, turning away and going to the kitchen Quickly she prepared a glass of Bournvita for Naani, gulped down one herself, and putting the frying pan on the fire, she broke two eggs into it and pulled out a couple of slices of bread onto a plate

She took the milk to Naani's bedside and helped her sit up. "You're looking agitated, Sushma What has happened?" Naani asked

"Nothing Naani I'm just wondering where Fluffy could have gone."

Naani finished her milk and got up, dragging herself slowly to wash up. "I'll manage," she said to her granddaughter and Sushma fled to the kitchen again, hastily putting the plate on a tray, making a cup of coffee and adding six bananas for good measure She walked out of the front door — and almost dropped the tray in shock!

The man was standing outside — leaning against the wall and looking large and dangerous. It seemed almost impossible that he had moaned in pain throughout the night like a wounded animal! He looked at the tray and gestured to her to

keep it on the steps. Quickly he began to eat, murmuring softly between mouthfuls. "Who comes here in the daytime? Where are the servants?"

"No one comes on Sunday," she replied realising that she would have no help until the next day 'Maybe someone will complain about the phone and they'll come to check it,' she thought desperately.

"Sushma, Sushma," Naani called and she ran in again.

"I'll sit out on my verandah," Naani said, and Sushma obediently helped her out onto the chairs there. The sun streamed onto the small patio and Sushma wondered how such a dazzling day could hold so much terror for her

She had breakfast with Naani, finding it difficult to swallow the cornflakes as she thought of the man lying in wait for her. When she had cleared up she went in again, leaving Naant outside She looked out of the front door, but he was not on the stairs. She had locked the door, but even then she was afraid that he'd have found his way in somehow She searched each room, then heaved a sigh of relief He had gone back upstairs. She climbed up cautiously and saw him sitting on the landing, leaning against the wall, his eves closed.

'I could do anything to him,' she thought, but knew that she couldn't. He was hurt, he hadn't harmed her. How could she take the law into her own hands? No, all she could do was wait. The morning passed slowly, each minute dragging itself out as Sushma wondered what she should do. "I'll try and keep him here until tomorrow morning when Brij and Shantabai and her family return, but will he stay? He'll try and leave tonight. I'm sure of it."

She put her hands into her pocket once again, then called out to Naani. "I'll make you some tea." She knew she was loud enough for the convict to hear her. Quickly, she prepared the tea, then emptying the contents of her pocket into one cup, she took it upstairs. He was sitting where she had seen him last, his eyes watching her every move as she ascended the stairs.

"Drink it," she said, handing over the cup. "You'll feel better."

He looked at her for a long moment, then swallowed the scalding liquid in one gulp and returned the cup to her. He made a face at the taste, but said nothing and Sushma took the cup downstairs, not wanting him to inspect the dregs. Half an hour later, she went up again, and he was slumped down on the landing, snoring softly.

'I hope I didn't give him too many tablets,' Sushma

thought. 'I hope he doesn't die of an overdose or something!' She knew *Naani* took one tablet every night, so she had dissolved six in the tea and given it to him

'I can cycle down to the Police Station now,' she thought, and quickly, she went to Naani and said, "I've lent my notes to Gayatri I'll go and collect them and be back in fifteen minutes Stay outside Naani. I'll return and help you in "

Naani nodded and smiled and remained where she was.

Sushma jumped onto her cycle and pedalled for all she was worth Within ten minutes she had reached the Police chowkey near the

bridge and was pouring out a garbled version of her ordeal.

"Just come back with me soon," she begged the Sub-Inspector "My grandmother is alone and if he wakes up, he'll kill her!"

The Sub-Inspector had children of her age, and he didn't wait for paper work. He realised her plight, radioed a message to the Control Room, then got onto his motorcycle with a constable and followed. Sushma's wildly pedalling figure down the lonely road to her house.

"An ideal place for runaways," the Constable said, as they came in sight of the double-storeyed bungalow standing alone, so cut off from the blocks of flats and burgeoning shopping centres a furlong away.

"But who thought they'd stay in the vincinity once they escaped?" replied the Sub-Inspector "No one knew that one of them was wounded From the girl's description, it is Jaikumar who is hurt Pradeep had left him and got away on his own But once we have one, we'll get the other."

The convict was still asleep when the two policemen climbed onto the landing. They handcuffed him even as he slept on unconcernedly, and Sushma went to tell her grandmother what had happened and

explain the presence of the Police

Within a short time, Jail authorities, more policemen, two reporters from the local newspapers and curious passers-by had invaded the compound Sushma was at a loss. "What do I do Naani?" she asked, flustered, reaction setting in and making her more nervous than she had been all through her ordeal

"Keep calm my girl,"
Naani said. "Don't say
anything Just let them
take the man away and
then everyone will go of
their own accord."

It was way past lunchtime and the doorbell was constantly ringing Fluffy had finally returned from his jaunt and sat washing himself placidly on the window-sill. Sushma was ready to cry in despair when she heard the loud hooting of a car horn. "What now?" she said, and opened the door to find her parents, Raju, her cousins, Aunt and Uncle unloading themselves from the vehicle.

"Oh Ma!" she cried and ran into Nina's arms

"What happened? Are you okay? Where's Naani?"

The whole story gushed out, even as Nina explained that they'd heard of the jailbreak and had tried to contact the house over the telephone but had found the phone dead. "We were worried, so we set off this morning instead of waiting

until tomorrow — and you can imagine our fright when we saw the police vehicles and the crowd in the compound. We thought something had happened to both of you!"

Raju came in. "What a boring trip we had *Didi!* I wish I'd stayed here instead and had all this excitement."

"Oh you're welcome to stay next time," Sushma replied caustically. "I can do without this kind of 'excitement'"

And laughing with relief at the end of the ordeal, she went with her brother to introduce herself to her cousins — who waited wide-eyed with admiration for the weekend heroine to show an interest in them.





STORY : ALAKA SHANKAR



IT WAS ANOTHER BUSY DAY IN A LITTLE FISHING VILLAGE IN KERALA THE FISHERMEN WERE GETTING READY TO SET OFF IN THEIR BOATS. MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN CHATTERED!

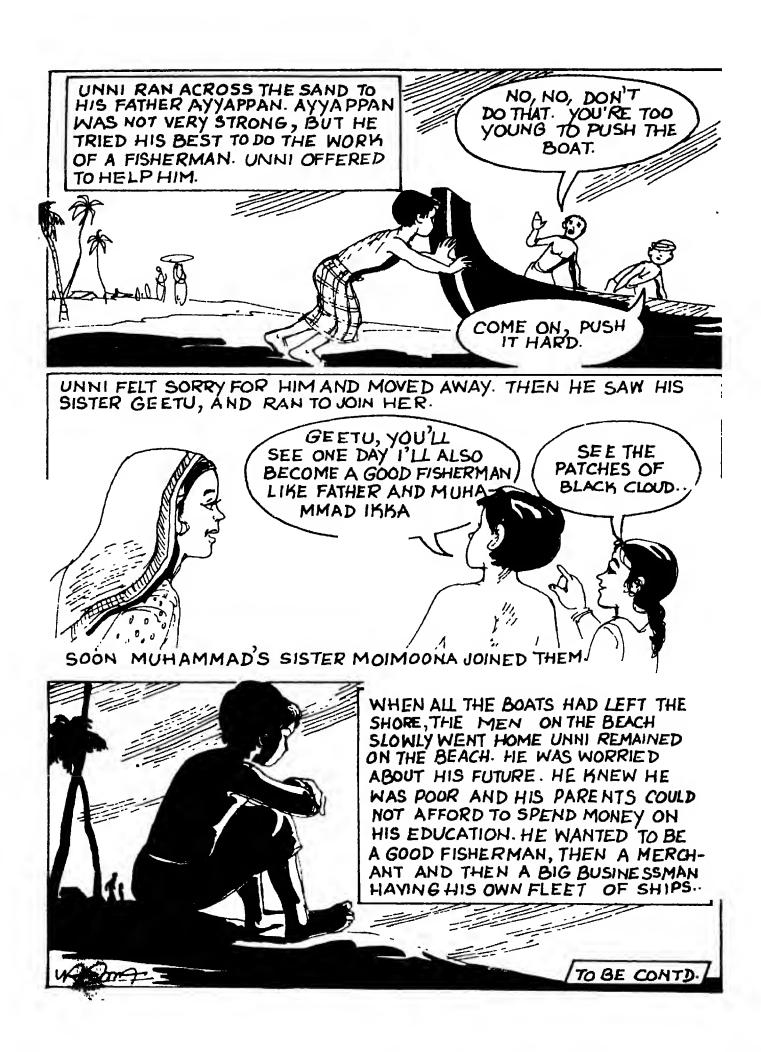


"AND BUSTLED ON THE BEACH. SUDDENLY THERE WAS A CALL SOME OLD FISHERMEN WERE SHOUTING THE LEADER OF THE FISHERMEN, KUNJAPPA ASKED..









Tales of Courage

Text: E. Shailaja Nair Photographs courtesy: ICCW

N April 21, 1991 tenyear-old Ranjeet Kaur woke up around midnight to the sound of gun shots Four terrorists had invaded her house in Sriganganagar in Rajasthan Hearing the shots, Ranjeet picked up her eight-yearold sister and five -vearold brother and helped them over the compound wall. Then she too leaped over and the three children hid in a nearby wheat field for over two hours After the terrorists had gone, Ranjeet and her brother and sister walked to the next village for help Though the terrorists killed her parents and grandmother, Ranjeet's presence of mind and courage helped save the three children's lives



Ranjeet has been chosen for the Geeta Chopra award of Rs 1000, a certificate and a medal. She is among 16 children who have been chosen for national bravery awards announced by the Indian Council for Child Welfare

The Bapu Gayadhani award of Rs 750, a certificate and a medal has been given to a handicapped 14-year-old boy who lives in the hutments of Shakarpur,



Delhi Harish Chandra, who lost both his arms in an electrocution accident some years ago, was sitting on the banks of the Yamuna when he saw three boys go into the river to collect a coconut floating on the water.

One of the boys came out of the river Harish saw another, eight-year-old Anand, screaming for help.

Without a second thought. Harish jumped into the Yamuna, swam towards the drowning boy, wrapped his legs round Anand and dragged him to the shore. Anand was saved, though the third boy, Vijender was drowned.

Seven-year-old Stalinjit
Singh was playing with
three of his cousins in Chila
village in Amritsar
district, Punjab, when
terrorists raided his house
and started firing Amidst
the hail of bullets Stalinjit
dragged the three children
behind a large bharola



used for storing grain There they hid, trembling with fear, fill the terrorissts left.

Eleven persons were killed in the shooting leaving Stalinjit and his cousins orphaned They are all living at the SOS Children's Village at Bawana in Delhi

Kedar Vinayak Phadke, 14, of Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh and Mridul Khera,



nine, of Noida, Uttar
Pradesh, have been chosen
for bravely fighting
naxalites and dacoits
respectively and helping
to overpower them Though
the attackers were armed,
the two boys grappled with
the miscreants, regardless
of injury to themselves

Ten-year-old Rakesh
Kumar of Bilaspur,
Himachal Pradesh, 13-year
old Santosh Bhaskar
Sarang of Ratnagiri,
Maharashtra, 12-year-old
Bipin Kumar Purohit of
Dalia, Madhya Pradesh,
13-year-old Mangilal of
Hosangabad, Madhya

Pradesh, and 15 year-old Manpreet Singh Ahuja of Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh, have all been chosen for saving others from drowning. Of them Santosh's deed



deserves special mention for he is deaf and dumb and saved another boy whom he saw drowning, though he could not hear the boy's screams for help

Twelve-year-old Manju
Bala of Kangra in Himachai
Pradesh fought a leopard
saving herself as well as
her sister from being
mauled to death, while
13-year-old Prem Prakash
Pathak of Lodhi Colony,
Delhi, saved his friend
irom a mad cow and
10 year-old Yathanzuma
saved his friend from a
swarm of bees

Ten-year-old Sangita Bedone of Rajgarh in Madhya Pradesh dragged her father out of a burning house while nine-year-old Lokesh Zalpuri of Jammu Tawi,



J&K, saved his family from a militant attack Six-year old Thiyam Mingthem Meeter of Impha¹



Manipur, saved his friend from being electrocuted by using his shirt as an insulator.

All these children will receive their awards from the Prime Minister, Mr. P.V Narasimha Rao on the eve of Republic Day And the next day you can see them participate in the parade, seated on elephants.

Australia at the Shankar's International Dolls Museum



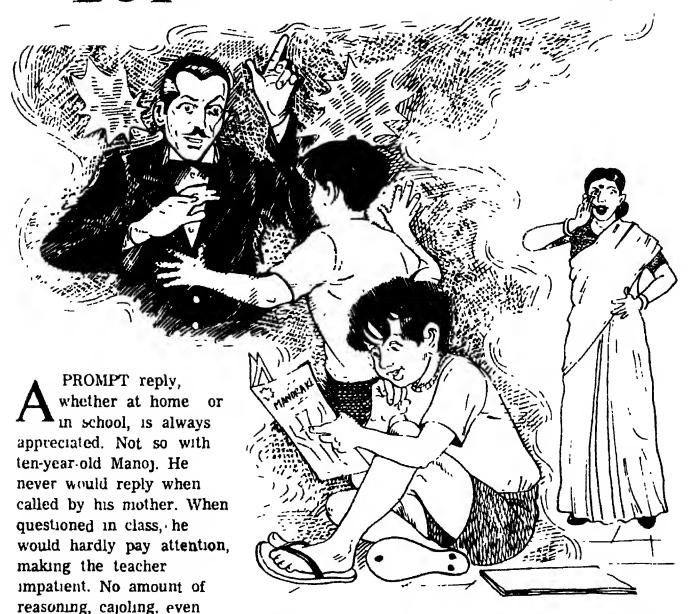


Mr John Zubrzuki (First Secretary, Public Affoirs, Australian High Commission) presenting a se' of Australian dolls to Ms. Shanta Srimvasan, Curator, SIDM

THE INATTENTIVE BOY

Story: R. Vishal (10)

Illustrations: Khitish Chatterjee



This did not mean that Manoj was a dim-wit He was in fact, quite an intelligent boy He concentrated totally on

punishment had had any

impact on careless Manoj

whatever he was doing, shutting out all external phenomena. When reading a Mandrake adventure, he would be transported to Xanadu, mesmerised by Mandrake's magic, hardly

hearing his mother calling him several times for dinner which was getting cold. This was disrespectful. But Manoj had his way, protests and threats proving to be of no effect. One cloudy evening,
Manoj was in the backyard
shaping a boomerang A
book lay open on the bench
with illustrations on how
to make one. His long,
dark hair fell over his eyes
as he was bent over his
work with a penknife in
hand.

His mother called out "Manoj, Manooooj" It sounded urgent

Uncaring Manoj did not even answer, "Coming"

Murmuring to herself something like "What a boy!" his mother said loudly. "Manoj, now listen carefully. We are going to Aunt Asha's house Are you coming?"

No reply Only the scratch, scratch of the penknife shaving the wood was heard.

"ARE YOU COMING?" asked his mother loudly and angrily



Manoj looked up, brushing the hair away from his forehead. He had not heard a word of what his mother had said.

Vaguely he replied, "No," and went back to his work.

His mother was clearly surprised. Manoj was fond of Aunt Asha 'This boy is becoming headstrong,' she thought Aloud she said, "Manoj, your father and I are going Your tea is on the table. We are locking the door We don't know at what time we will return Are you coming?"

Manoj only shook his head Shrugging her shoulders, his mother turned away, disturbed at her son's uncaring attitude

Thunder rolled across the sky Quick drops of rain nudged Manoj to reality He straightened himself and flung the boomerang. It did not return He looked into the book. One had to hold it at the base and flip it On the second try the boomerang smoothly came back to him after striking a branch on the tree. Immensely pleased, he took the book and raced inside with the boomerang to show it to his mother. He was quite wet by now.

"Mum, Mums," he called as he raced inside

There was no reply. It

was dark The lights had not been switched on. Manoj ran from the kitchen to the bedroom, to the drawing room — no mother anywhere Hopefully he ran to the door It would not open.

For the first time in his life, Manoj felt utterly lost. Flopping on the sota he tried to recall what his mother had sam Frowning hard he succeeded in recapturing every word from the store of his subconscious He felt all hollow inside, wishing and wishing that he had paid attention to what his mother had been saying Oh why, just why couldn't he pay heed? His heart thumped hard, the realisation proved agonising

Darkness had engulfed all the rooms It was raining heavily outside A streak of lightning accompanied by thunder shook Manoi out of the gathering gloom. He blinked — blinked back tears of fear and remorse Groping his way to the light switch he found to his horror that there was no current' Tears now freely rolled down his cheeks He did not know where the candles were kept. Crowding into a corner of the sofa,

he buried his headin his arms and wept Somewhere in the back of his mind the resolution that he would never be inattentive again gathered momentum

The time was hall past six A noise was heard from behind the locked door Manoj looked up. His face lit up Mother had returned. So why was she taking so long to open the lock? Undoubtedly there was a figure bent over the lock. Just as he swung his legs on the floor, the figure turned and quickly went away.

Fear paralyzed Manoj He couldn't move a lumb The darkness bore down on him With the greatest effort he got himself to crouch behind the sofa Gangsters come to rob the house thought Manoj with mounting dread. He shuf his eyes, clenched his hands and praved hard

Suddenly the door swung open Footsteps were heard Manoj stood sail, jorgetting to breathe

"Manoj, Manoooooji"
Panic seized him. An
inner voice screamed out,
"Mum has come—she does
not know gangsters have
broken in — they are
armed — dangerous —
ware Mum — warti

The lights had come on Manoj saw himself looking straight at his mother. There were no gengsters around

That night after Manoj was cosily tacked in bed, he asked his mother why she had bent over the lock and then turned away.

"I had the wrong keys with me," she said simling

"So I went back and got the keys from your father. You have been a brave boy though Aunt Asha has a surprise present for you"

"Please tell me what if is." begged Manoj

Fondly ruffling his hair, his mother said, "I guess it is a book on origami. Now sleep well and yes we will show your boomerang to your dear. Aunt Asha"

The next day dawned bright and clear

Manoj's father called bini "Manoj, are you ready! Come quickly I'll drop you you at Anni Asha's house and go to the office"

Imagine their surprise and great delight when prompt came the reply, "Coming rightaway!"



From 'Rags to Riches'

A review of the play by Vaijayanti Tonpe

ELHI Public School's fledgling branch at Vasant Kuni, New Delhi, still in the process of readying its new premises went public with Aurand Harris's musical Roas to Riches on November 20, 21 and 22 For a theatrical activity launch it seemed an old fashioned choice that with the experimental and the profound being "in" But when one realised it was a junior -chool and children just 9 and 10 participating the choice of a "moral humourintrigue-drama and music" routine seemed apt

To the credit of the children, they enacted their roles with sincerity Rags to Riches is the story of Raggedy Dick, a shoeshine boy who believes in being honest even at the cost of going hungry most days Rags is also the story of Mark Menton, a boy who now tries to earn a cent or two for Mother Watson, a drunken old crone in whose care his mother left

Mark before she died
These two 'honest' street
boys are offset by Mickey
Maguire a newspaper boy
alway, out to make a
quick buck. A ruffian and
a bully. Mickey was played
with case by Somesh
Salsatti

Rangedy Dick played by Siddharth Betra and Mark played by Udayaditya tool the story forward. All about positive values Rags to Riches reaches its chinax when Dick, whose

honesty is appreciated by fda Greyson, when he goes to return the change from a two dollar bill to her father Ida decides to teach Raggedy Dick to read He is given a new set of clothes and becomes respectable Mr. Greyson, a rich banker is looking for his nephew the son of his wife's dead sister. Mr. Greyson likes Dick's earnestness and puts.



CHILDREN'S WORLD JANUARY 1993

for the lost boy.

His wife's sister. Irene. had been disowned by her father because she married below her station. No one had seen Irene or her son, her husband too had died some years back. The boy would inherit a large sum from his repentant grandfather. Dick, formerly of the streets, sets out to look for the boy

Follow a series of events when the evil Mother Watson plots to cheat the innocent Mark Menton, the real and rightful heir of his inheritance by presenting the wicked and wily Mickey Maguire as Irene's son But of course how can evil triumph when good abounds? All's we'll that

ends well with Mark getting his inheritance and Raggedy Dick becoming the educated Richard, with a responsible job in Mr. Greyson's bank

A commendable show with good supporting acting from Roswell, the butler, played by Aditya Sethia, Ida Greyson acted by Tashi Yangzom Narboo, the policeman— Dheeraj Gupta—and Mr. Greyson—Rajat Malhotra.

Mother Watson played by Shona Malhotra would have been more believable if she did not have that exaggerated, put-on walk. The chorus and the pianist, Mrs Indranie Guha, did the show proud. In fact the hummable music was what redeemed the

musical, which otherwise had all the trappings of a Stephen Marazzi production. It began late the show scheduled for 11 a.m on Sunday, November 22. began at 11.35 a.m., the bad weather being a foul and lame excuse.) There was the proverbial Stephen Marazzi trade-mark chaseor run-round the audience hall by the main characters. a cliched, over used gimmick. The play was under-rehearsed, the older members of the cast, forgetting-missing their cues .

For a popular director whose sincerity in striving for-better-children's theatre has never been in doubt, Stephen Marazzi has a lot of rethinking to





do. Otherwise the lapses in DPS Vasant Kunj's musical Rags to Riches were highly pardonable.

One even overlooked—almost appreciated the headmistress's overzealous enthusiasmin seeing the play reach its fruitful conclusion. She got so carried away, she actually took to conducting the last number from her seat in the front row of the audience hall!

Well, of such first shows are creative geniuses made. Quite a few, it is to be presumed were made through Rags and Riches!

CLEANLINESS

They talk in innocent tones
Of cleanliness and

sanitation.

They frown at others who eat at street corners,

and

then expatiate on theories of bacteriology.

But look at
their homes! Their servants
robed in oily rags with
dirt hanging like icicles,
oozing putrid smells from
froth-laden mouths.

Theu

cook with hands that harbour microbes hanging in

scores by their fingertips.

These are the people who make the god of "cleanliness"

Surabhi Arora (15)

ECSTASY

I made it!

All I can see now is joy!

happiness and things I can't

express in words

I felt as if thick drops of

love were being

showered on me by the gods.

I then saw in the core

the core of my mind an immense explosion,

of colours and feelings so rare.

Oh, what a beautiful thing is ecstasy.

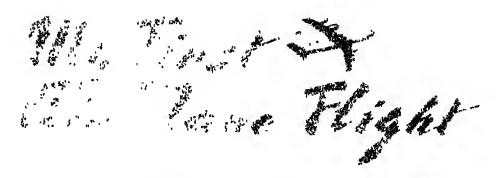
It's like a coloured picture

which can be seen with one's eyes closed

but disappears within a

fraction of a second.

Nidhi Tyagi (11)



Story: Nihar Mehta (13) Illustrations: Khitish Chatterjee

ROOM The car sped across the highway of New York city with an anxious father, a mother with half-bitten nails and a cool and confident me (I never worry.)

"We shall be late "
muttered my mother

"Oh, stop it! We are still two hours early," I shouted

"But son, this is your first flight and you are going alone," whimpered my mother

I sighed. It was the unopteenth time So what

of I was going alone all the way from New York to Bombay, with a change of aircraft at Frankfurt. After all, I am (heh, heh) a tall, dark and pretty handsome teenager of 13

After the man behind the desk had given me the ticket and the baggage claim tags, I went through for the security check There I was very embarrased My mother would not stop kissing me and my father would not stop squashing and choking me in the bargain with his extra large bear hug.

Finally, when 'sad farewells and bon voyages' were over, I breathed freely and went into the nearest bathroom, washed my face, smeared with lipstick marks and adjusted my collar.

Now it was time for boarding I looked at my ticket How dull! Economy Class I looked around and very innocently I took a seat at a window in the Business Class! (I have seen this in movies)

Ho! Yawn ! Ahh ! I asked the charming air hostess for two extra



pillows and a leg-rest. The person next to me was a peevish businessman. I chattered nineteen to the dozen with him and slowly sked him for his novel and started reading it. I fell asleep and snored away much to his annoyance, possibly

I woke up in the morning (or evening or night, I don't know, it is so confusing) and had a hearty breakfast with a third helping of cake and two cans of Coke. After a pleasant flight I disembarked at Frankfurt. "This is so easy and fun, too," I said to myself.

I knew what to do, thanks to Dad who had made me mug it up. I gave niy passport to the man who issued my board ng pass and asked which gate to go to. "Seventeen," the man replied in his German accent. I thought he had said seventy This was where things began to go wrong If I could turn the clock back, I would have made one of my famous sarcastic comments at the man and asked him to improve his pronounciation

To gate 70 I went and found a bookstore. In Frankfurt the currency is Deutsche Marks I had only a few Indian rupees but also an American credit card How lucky Charging on my dad's account I bought a horde of Archie comics in fact so engrossed

was I in those comics I did not hear the announcement asking passengers to board the plane. (Ever since I hate Archie comics). I noticed people going towards the gate. I too pushed in front and went into the aircrast. I noticed something strange but did not give it much thought. There were only a handful of Indians and lots of Chinese and Japanese people. But since the person next to me was an Indian we got into a conversation Then he asked me, "Which hotel are you going to put up at in Tokyo?"

TOKYO???

At the same moment came the announcement, "All passengers flying nonstop to Tokyo please fasten your seat belts..."

I heard no more

I grabbed my haversack and ran to the air hostess.

"What is this. ." she
began when I let out
a blood-curdling scream.
"I'm on the wrong flight."
She gasped but with
excellent presence of mind
she rushed to the cockpit
while I wiped the sweat
off my brow

Sniff' What will happen? In Tokyo. Help

But the air hostess soon came back, took me by the hand and led me towards the airport. I could not do





anything but worry. Why do all problems rise from nowhere? Cross-examin ng me, the hostess found out everything.

She led me towards a

T. V monitor Displayed on the screen was "Delta flight 100 ready for departure gate seventeen" She rushed me and literally pushed me into the aircraft

in the nick of time. I was in such a frenzy that the air hostess took pity on me and put me right up in front that was the 'First Class'.

Soon I got over my fright (the extra helping of chocolate helped) and went to sleep When I woke up I watched the movie 'Home Alone' and soon forgot the trouble I had been through the last few bours I was finishing the last of my comics when we landed in Bombay

Then onwards it was smooth sailing. I passed the Immigration, cutting through about seventy people on the pretext of being a minor. I collected my baggage I got through Customs and ran to my ca: waiting to transport me hor

JOKES

Customer: "Why does the chicken served to me have only one leg?"

Waiter: "You want to eat it or dance with it?"

Rohit: "At last, I've cured my son of biting his nails."

Neighbour: "Really. How did you do that?" Rohit: "I knocked out all his teeth."

Judge: "The next man to raise his voice will be thrown out."

Prisoner: "Hip, hip, hooray."

Patient: "What is the best way to stop a running nose."

Doctor: "Stand on your head!"

Patient: "Doctor, I feel like an apple!" Doctor: "Come over here, I won't bite you."

Doctor: "How many fingers am I holding up Patient: "Six."

Doctor: "I don't know what is worse you:

eyesight or your arithmetic."

Mushtaq Ali

Book Safari for Success

INDIAN SAFARI An exciting expedition across the country (An educational game for children 9 years and above) Creative Educational Aids Pvt. Ltd. Price Rs. 95,-

If "all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy," would "all play and no work" make Jagdish a hyper-active boy? But if sludy becomes play and play-study, then what would make Jack dull? Confusing isn't it? And yet how many times before. after and during exams have we wished, prayed, or willed studies to seem like play and vice versa? Now at last, with Creative Educational Aids' "Indian Safari", this near impossibility is beginning to seem like reality.

Attractively packed and sturdily built this "game" centres around Geography How often have we wished while preparing for an exam that you could have at a glance all the essential facts about a particular country? Its area, population, language, capital

city, currency, its natural resources Of the three game combinations that come with of asking this Indian Safari set, the one titled "Discover the World - A min! encyclopaedia," gives vou this information about 50 countries of the world. at the turn of the wheel

Similarly, "Discover India, a mini encyclopaedia of India" provides facts and figures about all of India's States and Umon Territories, a most reasonable purchase But perhaps the most exciting of the three 'studygames' included in this package is the Indian Safari that can be played like a Quiz game by 2 to 6 players, just like the preceding two, but with more challenging results. This game has 56 question cards all related to India, her culture, places of tourist interest, agriculture and industry, physical features and buildings and monuments Of course it comes with answer sheets too, so that once you are done with having put your memory to test, you can go about learning all the

answers to questions that Quiz Masters are so fond

Indeed a most engrossing pastime, irrespective of whether you take to it as study or indoor playwhether you go it alone or involve your friends. And if the exorbitant prices of toys and games are anything to go by, then this Indian Safarı set at Rs 95.00 is highly commended as under hundred rupees.

How to Achieve Success By Anant Pai **UBS** Publishers Distributors Ltd. Price Rs. 25.00

Whether the secret of success is Positive Thinking, or it is an aim, or restraint, it is no secret that all of us aspire to be successful — in at least one sphere of our choosing. But how does one measure success? And above all this, if one has not "achieved success" by standard norms, does it mean we are "unredeemable" failures? Normally, one would

not give a book like this a second glance More likely if there were or are other books like this they would escape notice because they would probably belong to the "guide" and "key" variety promising results through badly printed, badly produced, errorinfested pamphlets that would probably be marketed through invisible routes It is fitting therefore that there is now a decently printed book available It is also a matter of great satisfaction that it has been written by Anant Par who needs no introduction to readers of Amar Chitra Katha, Tinkle, Partha, er even Children's Worldbecause though the first three are edited and brought out by him, his name has been figuring in Children's World through senalised comics strips and in reviews of his books

Uncle Par has been the guardian angel of several thousand teenagers and adolescents through his Institute of Personality Development and it is with much authority that he writes What is most gratifying about How to Achieve Success, however is the fact that it is a perfect blend of Western thought and deep Indian philosophy in all its

meaningful application It takes this book to make one realise that the question "What is the secret of success" should so aptly be placed in the mouth of the Sphinx—who speaks but once in many inillion years. The question is undoubtedly Sphinx-like, but the answers as Anant Pai gives them are well-within the common man's iboy or girl) grasp.

It is so simply and effortiessly told, taking us through centuries of man's quest for success, through the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, through other philosophies of the world, that one is willing to forego any instant achievement of success to leasurely read the book a second time

Where it scores highest, and why it should therefore prove a valuable asset to Indian youngsters today, is its unabashed and matter of-fact dealing with sex Questions or rather misconceptions that have often baffled because their discussion may have been considered taboo, are dealt with as normally us those related to classroom or playfield performance Searing thoughts like "I am not attractive enough". or "my sister/brother is better-looking or better loved by my parents".

have often either become barriers to the proper development of personality and therefore hindered the achieving of success, or vice-versa become the driving force behind the desire to excel. Plaintive examples, but the degree and extent of damage such confusions in the minds of teenagers and adults may cause, is again, through simplistic examples proved to be those that can be dealt with effortlessly to achieve positive results

Once again, this book like the earlier How to Develop Self-confidence by Anant Pai (reviewed in Children's World. September 1992) may not give you instant formulae for success, but by sweeping away the cobwebs one unwillingly accumulates in one's mind. it will render the reader yeoman service How you decide to achieve success after going through the book, should be your own secret plan. And what better way than to start January 1993 with it!

V.T.

An Island of Trees
Nature Stories and Poems
By Ruskin Bond
Designed and illustrated by
Suddhasattwa Basu
Price: Rs. 22.90

The Sword of Dara Shikoh And Other Stories From History By Subhadra Sen Gupta Clustrated by Tapas Guha Price: Rs. 22,90

Sarisrip Ke Ansoo (Hindi)
By Shinji Tajima
Ulustrated by Kang Woo-Hyon
Price: Rs: 17.90
(Also available in Urdu, Bengali,
Gujarati, Tamil, and
Malayalam).
All published by Ratna Sagar,
1992

Concern for the environment is the predominant topic of discussions these days. There is a lot being written and talked about but much of it is dry matter—facts and ligures to jolt you out of torpor and galvanise you into action to secure your tomorrow. All very fine

But here is this delightful collection of stories and poems putting across a similar message in a subtle and refreshing manner Every reader could interpret the stories and poems in his own way or just read them for the fun of it.

You will want to read the stories again and again—of creatures that found shelter in the author's home and in due course became members of the family. Many of these stories have appeared in print before; that does not rob them of their readability.

His obvious love for nature, simplicity and felicity of language make Ruskin Bond a pleasure to read, always.

Suddhasattwa Basu needs a special word of appreciation for the illustrations and design of the book, which truly complements Ruskin Bond's sensit ve writing

The following poem
"The Snail' has been taken
trom the book

Leaving the safety of a rocky ledge The snail sets out On his long journey Across a busy path The grass is greener on the other side! For tender leaf or juicy stem He'll brave the hazards of the road Not made to dodge or weave or run. He must awart each threatening step Chancing his luck, Keeping his tentacles crossed! Though all unaware Of the dangers of being squashed, He does not pause or flinch-A cartwheel misses him by an inch!— But slithers on, Intent or dinner. He's there at last, his prizeRich leaf-mould where the grass grows tall. I salute you, Snail. Somehow, you've made me feel quite small

Subhadra Sen Gupta's The Sword of Dara Shikoh is another collection of stories which have appeared in print earlier. Nevertheless they make for a good read, recreating history—bygone society, lifestyles people.

In 'A Rose for the Princess', gardener Magbool, who creates beautiful roses, has as companion to the Agrabazaar, Princes, Jahanara He does not recognise her Akram and Mand find the sword of Dara Shikoh in the eponymous story Putling her imagination to good use Parvati draws the sky, the breeze, a bird's song and butterflies on pots and thus sells the unusual pots to none other than the Queen in 'Painting the Breeze' A poem leads Laxman, Nakul and Shiela into 'The Pataliputra Mystery' and they save the life of their king Salim, helping out at his father's foodstall in Agra, sings as he works in 'Salim's Song' It attracts Tansen, who offers to teach him to sing. 'The Scent of Jasmine' helps Arjun and Sajid catch culprits while

Irian's prowess at chess helps him get his brother a job in 'Music Magic'

There is a glossary at the end to explain the unfamiliar words in the preceding stories. Tapas Guha's illustrations strike the right note in the collection

story of a dinosaur who wakes up after a long, long sleep. He has been asleep under the surface of the earth, in a desert. One day a caravan of traders stops for a rest in the oasis. Shortly they begin fighting for the money they have

received after selling their wares. Each one claims a larger share than the other. Finally swords are drawn and a fight ensues. Soon none is alive.

At this point the dinosaur awakens He is moved to tears by the sight that meets his eye. He wonders aloud why when man does not possess fangs and claws does he fight to kill He is the last dinosaur on earth and has been living for ages. He asks himself how long he will have to live more to see peace and happiness on earth Then he turns into a rock.

This story was first published in Japanese. This book has won the Grand Prix Noma Concours for Children's Picture Book Illustrations, 1986, the Kodansha Publishing Cultural Prize, 1989, and the Golden Plaq of BIB 1989.

The much acclaimed illustrations, different from the normal fare, Indian children are exposed to, might prove a novelty, although the word 'Sarisrip' (in Hindi) may be a mouthful for the youngsters for whom it is meant

B.N.

DREAMS

Dreams come during nights, Some so angry Some so happy Sometimes weeping Sometimes laughing In one I was crying In another I was smiling Some are ferocious Some are hilarious Sometimes nice But sometimes bitter Ha, dreams why do you Come to make me mad Sometimes I wake up Because of a dream so bad But sometimes I sleep Just because of a dream, so glad.

Just Received

- ARMENIAN FOLK-TALES
 by Hovannes Tournanian
 English translation Saco V.H. Stephan
 Retold by Vernon Thomas
 Better yourself Books (Bombay).
- 2. HOW TO DEVELOP A SUPER MEMORY by Anant Pai UBSPD.
- 3. LOTPOT VIDEO (Hindi) No. 18.

Lakshmi (10)



PART-VI

Story: Sarojini Sinha Illustrations: R. Ashish Bagchi

The story so far .

It is April 1857 Govind is helping his well-known vaidya father, Ayodhya Prasad, to make medicines. Govind is 14-years-old and married His younger sister, Champa is to leave shortly for her husband's house in Meerut Govind's mother, Rukmini, asks him to put up a swing for Champa on the neem tree Doing so, Govind recalls how, as a child he would use the hollow in the tree to hide his goodies, so that it came to be called his 'treasure bor'

That night, a visitor, Chintamani, a sepon in the British army, brings news of Mangal Pandey A fellow soldier, he had rebelled aquinct use of cartridges greased with pig or cow fat Other soldiers followed suit. Pandey and his companions were hanged An uprising was expected. Chintamani requests support. Ayodhya Prasad agrees.

Accompanying Champa to Mecrut, Govind befriends soldiers Shyam Singh and Abdul Fazal Khan The uprising has spread to Mecrut. Caught in the crossfire between the oilizens and the British, Govind is rescued by Abdul

Back in Delhi, it is Govind's turn to help Abdul when he is hurt in a blast. His father is away

From Aligarh, Ayodhua Prasad writes to Govind, urging him to leave with his mother, his brother, and servant, Bho'a, for Bulandshahr where his uncle, Ganga Prasad lives However, Gawia Prasad himself arrives. But Govind, raging with fever, cannot accompany them He promises to join them later. He is left in Bhola's care.

Upon recovering, Govind is reluctant to leave Delhi where 'll the action is One night Chintamani arrives and informs Gowind and Bhola of the progress of the uprising. Inspired, Govind tells Abdul of his desire to join the army. Abdul takes him to his patron, Mirza Yunus Khan, who agrees to let Govind train with his soldiers.

Meanwhile, Mirza Sahib is one of the targets of a deliberate attempt to create suspicion against the Emperor's supporters. To clear his name, Abdul and Govind offer to go to the firangi camp to meet Mirza's contact there and try and get information of military significance which he can then pass on. Waiting outside the camp when Abdul does not return, it is Govird and Bhola's turn They meet Anant Ram, Mirza's spy.

Now read on

Before Govind could ask where Abdul was, a gong sounded, startling both of them Anant Ram smiled.

"It's all right," he said.
"The gong summons the sahibs to dinner. Wait under the tree there. I shall come to you after dinner is over."

Before leaving, he glanced at the two sharply. "Both of you look rather young to have come here on a dangerous mission." He did not wait for an answer.

Govind and Bhola waited, while the officers ate a six-course dinner. After the meal, Anant Ram came out and said, "Come to the kitchen tent. We'll talk there."

The cooks had already left the tent and only the servants were there washing up and cleaning. One of them was to sleep in the tent at night, but Anant Ram told him, "My nephews have come and I have to discuss family matters with them It's too late to go home and Pd like to talk to them here Do you mind sleeping elsewhere while I and my nephews sit here and talk?"

The young chap grinned and said, "I'd be happy to call it a day if you agree to spend the night here. But please keep an eye on things. If anything is lost, the head cook'll skin me alive."

"Don't worry," Anant Ram assured him. "He isn't so bad. His bark is worse than his bite. But we shall keep an eve."

The servant washed the dusters and hung them to dry on a rope which ran across one side of the tent Then he put on his kurta and left.

"Mirza Yunus Khan didn't send us to you. He sent a trooper named Abdul Aziz Khan. Did you meet him?"

"No," replied Anant
Ram, looking quite puzzled.
"We came with Abdul
from Delhi. He left us in
the jungle below the Ridge
telling us he would return
by the afternoon. We
waited till it was evening
Then we got worried and
came looking for him"

"I heard the soldiers had caught a spy. That must be your friend"
Anant Ram said gravely.

A cry of alarm broke from Govind's lips "Abdul a prisoner of the British' What'll they do to him?"

"He'll be shot at dawn tomorrow, I'm told."

"How terrible! We must rescue him Tell us where he is," Govind pleaded

"Sh' sh Not so loud.
Don't get excited or we
won't be able to help your
friend," Anant Ram
cautioned. "They've
imprisoned him in a place

we call the Bell-of-Arms. It's a small circular building where arms are stored. There's a sentry keeping watch all the time. You had better go or you'll be in trouble too.'

"We can't let Abdul be shot," Govind protested.
"We must help him."

"You boys are brave, but you won't be able to do much to help your friend. There are soldiers everywhere and guards at the Bell-of-Arms."

"That maybe so, but we won't leave our friend behind and go away," Govind was emphatic

Anant Ram tried his best to send them home "You say your friend came here to get important information which would be useful to the Emperor He was arrested as soon as he reached the Ridge and I didn't even know he had been sent by Mirza Yunus Khan Now I'll give you the information and you go back to Delhi with it."

Thinking he had succeeded in persuading the boys to leave, Anant Ram said, "After I give you the information, I'll see you down to where your horses are."

"Let's have the information, Chachaji," Gov.nd insisted.

"At present the Angrez have only three thousand men and a few light field-guns and seige-guns,"

Anant Ram began, "They have just enough gun powder for a day's fighting. Also their morale is low because of the terrible heat and cholera But this'll soon change. I hear that a seige train, with heavy field guns and barrels of gun powder, is coming to Delhi from Ferozepur, their nearest magazine. When the seige train reaches Delhi they'll start their assault on the city. They're also expecting a new commander who'll lead them to victory. You must tell Mirza Yunus Khan to prevail upon the Emperor and the Commander-in-Chief to attack the Angrez now. Otherwise it may be too late"

"We'll give Mirza sahib the information," Govind assured him

"Now I'll take you to where your horses are," Anant Ram said.

"But Chachan, we aren't leaving without Abdul Aziz Khan," Govind said "We just can't leave him here."

"Now don't be foolish, boys Go back to Delhi with the information l've given you"

But the boys had made up their minds. They would not go back without Abdul.

"You seem determined to run into danger," Anant Ram said, throwing up his hands in despair.

"It isn't that. It would be wrong and cowardly to leave our friend and go away."

"You're right," Anant Ram admitted "But how can we help this Abdul Aziz Khan?"

"Please think of some way Chachan," Govind urged.

"It's unfortunate you have come to me so late Had you come earlier, I would have got help from friends. But now we'll have to rely on ourselves."

"There're three of us," Govind said eagerly.

Anant Ram smiled sarcastically. "Two boys and one old man. What can we do?"

"I'm sure we can do something."

"Well, let us think of the hurdles and how to deal with them. First, how'll we overpower the guard or guards at the Bell-of-Arms? After rescuing your friend, how'll you escape? We must think of all these before we embark on this venture."

"How many men are likely to be on guard at the Bell-of-Arms?" Govind asked.

"Since they are not expecting a rescue bid, there may be one or, at the most, two men on guard."

"And will the door be locked or only bolted?"

"I can't say, but we should

take a big, sharp knife or a chisel or something to break it open."

"But we'll have to get rid of the guard first," Govind pointed out.

Bhola, who had been a silent observer, butted in. "Do you have some chilli powder, Chachaji?"

"What do you want chilly powder for?" asked Anant Ram.

"I'll steal upto the sentry and throw the stuff into his eyes. While he's blinded, you and Govind bhavya overpower him and take the key off him. Simple!"

"Brilliant!" Govind exclaimed. "We must take a piece of cloth to gag the sentry so that he does not shout for help."

Anant Ram thought for a while and said, "I can't think of a better plan than Bhola's. So let's set about it."

He looked inside the tins which stood in a row on a table and found some chillipowder.

"Chha!" he said in annoyance, "there's very utile chilli powder here. There's plenty of pepper though. The Angrez prefer pepper to chilli powder. A mixture should be more potent for the purpose we have in view."

After tying the stuff in a napkin, he undid the rope on which the dusters were hung. "With this rope we can the the sentry up."

Then he picked up a big kitchen knife and a couple of dusters. "These will come in handy to gag the sentry. You fellows must leave as soon as we free your friend, if at all we manage to free him."

"What about you, Chachan?" asked Govind.

"I shall stay on," Anant Ram replied

"Won't they suspect you?"

"They won't. I've long been working for them."

The night sky was clouded over and it was darker than ever. Govind, Bhola and Anant Ram stole through the city of tents, where the British officers and men slept.

There were sentries on guard at several points, but Anant Ram knew where they were and, dodging behind tents, avoided them. The sentries too were inclined to be careless because they were sure no enemy could penetrate the camp. So, without much difficulty Anant Ram and the boys reached the Bell-of-Arms.

The building stood a little away from the tents and Anant Ram whispered, "We'll have to run to the Bell-of-Arms when I give the signal."

The sentry must have heard something, because

he shouted, "Halt! Who goes there?"

Anant Ram and the boys froze in the shadow of a tent. Seeing no one and hearing nothing, the sentry relaxed.

"You go ahead, Bhola." Anant Ram urged softly "We'll be right behind you Now run."

Bhola ran as fast as he could and, before the sentry knew what was happening, threw the chilli powder right into his eyes.

The scream that rose in his throat was stifled by Govind who jumped on him and brought him down. Together they rolled on the ground, struggling

Anant Ram grabbed the sentry's musket and brought its butt firmly down on his head. The blow was just hard enough to knock him senseless.

Within seconds, Anant Ram had taken the duster from Govind and gagged the sentry. He then searched his pocket for the key, but could not find it.

"Never mind," he whispered, "I'll open the door with the knife."

He inserted the kitchen knife under the latch and twisted it until it gave way. They pushed the door open and rushed in.

"Who's there?" Abdul Azız Knan asked in a

weak voice.

"It's Govind, Abdul.
Thank God you're alive!"
Anant Ram struck a
match and they could see
Abdul lying on the ground.

match and they could see Abdul lying on the ground. He used the knife again to cut the rope which the prisoner was tied with.

"Come on, get up. We must leave quickly," he urged.

Abdul groaned. "I'm so stiff I can't get up."

Govind and Bhola kneeled and rubbed his ankies and feet, while Anaut Ram kept saying, "Quick, we mustn't waste time."

By now the sentry was strugging and grunting. So they pulled Abdul to his feet and helped him hobble out.

A whistle sounding somewhere acted as a spur.

"Follow me," whispered Anant Ram, hurrying into the darkness.

The boys ran stumbling after him After what seemed like ages, they reached the thatched huts where the servants lived. There was no sound of pursuit and Anant Ram said, "I think we're safe."

He led them to the footpath leading to the jungle and cautioned, "Hide in the jungle. As soon as it is dawn, make your way to Delhi. I shall

return to my hut."

The three hid in the jungle, waiting for daybreak. Then they hastened to the peepul tree, under which the horses had been tethered. The horses were missing. but Bhola's pony was grazing nearby. Whoever had stolen the horses had not bothered about the pony

Govind was sad he had lost his horse, but there was nothing he could do about it Nor was there time to go searching for the animals.

"Abdul," he said, "take the pony and ride to Delhi. We'll follow on foot."

Abdul would not agree But Govind was firm. "Look, don't argue. The Angrez know you and will recognize you because they caught you as a spy. You were their prisoner for a whole day. If they find you, they'll shoot you. But no one is likely to recognize us. And even if we are caught, they won't shoot us because

they have nothing against us."

When Abdul still hesitated, Govind raised his voice. "Don't waste time, Abdul. They'll soon be looking for you. Remember, we risked our lives to save you."

Abdul realised he was right. He got on the pony and rode off

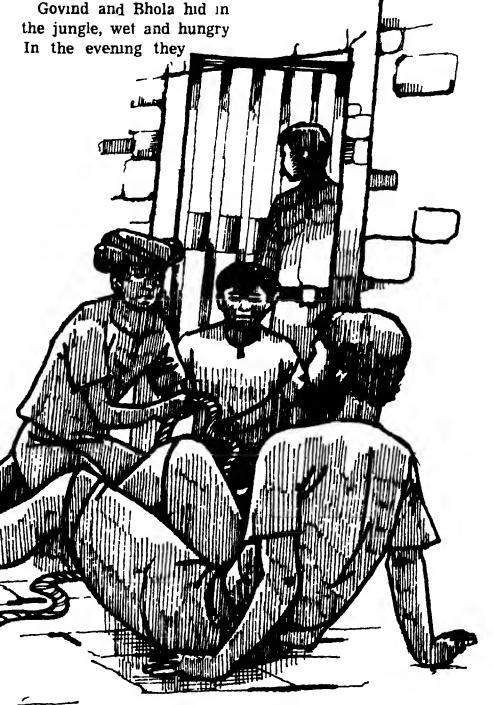
The British did not make much of an effort to catch the escaped prisoner, because they knew that bands of sepoys were

started walking towards

Delhi.

roaming the countryside around Delhi.

Govind and Bhola joined one such group and reached. Delhi safely.



Abdul was overjoyed to see them. "But for Bhola and you," he said, "I'd be dead by now."

"Tell me," said Govind "how did you get caught?"

"It was foolish of me,"
Abdul said sheepishly.
"I picked up a quarrel
with one of the shopkeepers
and called him a traitor
because he was selling
goods to the firangis."

"I too was on the point of shouting at Kuber Chand," admitted Govind, "but I checked myself in time."

Abdul continued. "The quarrel attracted a crowd and some firangi soldiers came to find out what it was all about. They caught hold of me and took me to a senior officer. I don't know what they said, but I found myself being hustled into that circular building and locked in Later I was told I was to be shot as a spy. Had it not been for you fellows, it would have been all over with me."

The three of them went to Mirza Yunus Khan and told him what had happened on the Ridge. They gave him the information they had got from Anant Ram.

"Bravo boys. I'm indeed proud of you," beamed a grateful Mirza sahib.

Govind's heart swelled

with pride. Here he was being complimented by no less a person than Mirza sahib himself for what he had done. Only the other day he was openly sceptical of what boys like him could do for the cause of freedom.

A couple of days later they heard that Anant Ram had been arrested, found guilty of treason and shot. Govind, Bhola and Abdul grieved for the brave man. Without his help, they would never have been able to rescue Abdul.

About the same time a spy from Ferozepur confirmed the information Anant Ram had given them. A seige train had left for Delhi. It was ten kılomeires long and consisted of six hundred and fifty three bullock carts laden with twenty thousand sand bags and beavy powder barrels. The big field-guns were drawn by elephants, but the ground was so wet and slushy that the guns often sank in the mud and even the elephants found it difficult to pull them out. So the convoy was expected to take a month to reach Delhi.

That gave the people of Delhi sufficient time to take steps to meet the impending British onslaught.

But, alas, the
Commander-in-Chief
Bukht Khan and Prince
Mirza Mughal were for
ever quarrelling among
themselves Each accused
the other of being a coward
and incapable of facing
the firangis.

Bukht Khan kept saying he would not allow the seige train to reach Delhi.

"Ah!" taunted Prince
Mirza Mughal. "So you and
your brave men will
march to Ferozepur to
destroy the seige train?
Won't you?"

Red in the face, Bukht Khan retorted, "Why should we march to Ferozepur? I shall destroy the seige train when it approaches Delhi."

"Brave words!" mocked Prince Mirza Mughal. "If you destroy the seige train, it'll be the first success to your credit."

Bukht Khan scowled, because what the prince said was true. He had not succeeded in restoring order and discipline among the sepoys. There was no money to pay them and they went about plundering the villages around Delhi.

So he decided to act. He went to the Emperor and said, "Your Majesty, how can my men fight when they haven't received their pay for a long time?"

The Emperor gave the men some money from his treasury as part payment of their wages.

Eight thousand men under Bukht Khan rode out to top the seige train. There was heavy fighting at Najafgarh, but the sepoys were routed and the seige train moved towards Delhi.

When the defeated men reached the city, there was despair everywhere.

People west round region: "We've lost the chance.

Now the Angrez are too strong to be defeated."

Govind shook his head sadly. "Abdul," he said, "the fight for independence started so well and we had such high hopes. But somewhere along the way we seem to have lost the will to win."

Abdul flared up. "What kind of talk is this, Govind?"

defensive." Abdul was troubled. The seige train had reached Delhi and he was waiting impatiently for the "Of course the men fought bravely," agreed



everywhere There's no

and not the foreigners.

On the other hand, the

stronger than they were

and soon we'll be on the

Angrez are becoming

unity and the leaders are

busy fighting one another

THE DREAM

I woke up fresh,

The day was gay,

Thought my poverty,

Won't always stay

Quickly, I got up,

Went to the forest

Where the greenery,

Was at its best.

I picked up my axe,

Began chopping briskly.

And as I hid from guards,

Piled everything hastily

This continued for long,

None knew of my ways

Life became luxurious,

Pleasantly passed the days

But, one year came a terrible draught,

They said it was due to felling of trees.

Now, I considered myself guilty,

And sat for long, repenting, on my knees.

I wished to buy grain.

From my great loads of money,

But when I tried to do so,

I found there wasn't any.

Just as I had killed the trees,

My own people died.

From the long hands of nature,

Even I couldn't hide.

In this terrible life.

I got a jerk.

I woke up with a terrible fright

And as I looked around myself,

Found I was dreaming all night.

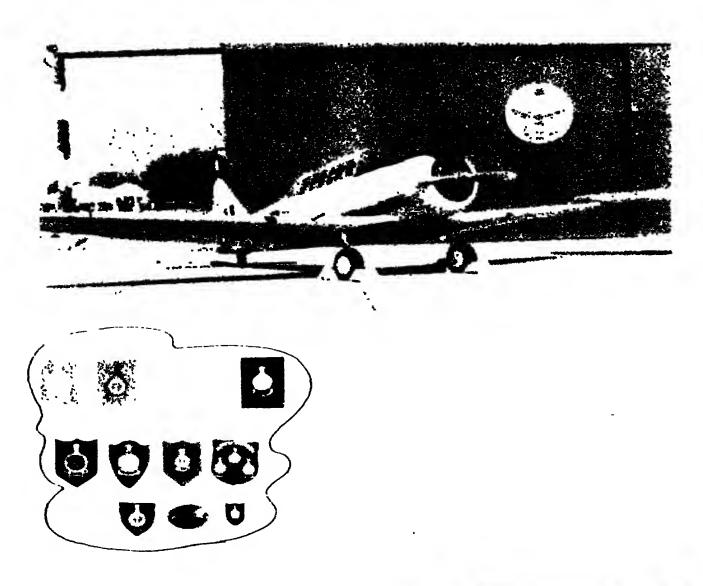
But, from the dream as well,

I certainly learnt a lesson.

We must lessen the felling of trees,

For, dark times have already begun.

Vaishali Sinha (14)

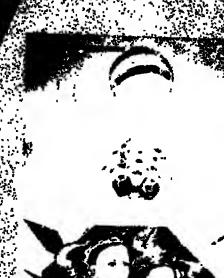




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Additional to the following the first section of



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Circulation & Advertisements A.J Joseph

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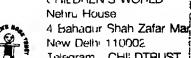
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Telegram CHILDTRUST Telephones 3316970-74

Cover design Deepak Harichandan

DEAR EDITOR ...

I like Children's World very much. When my cousin showed it to me, I first thought that it would be like any other, full of unbelievable ghost stories and talking machines. Actually, I used to read them so much that i and got bored. My cousin told me that "this was just the time for Children's World". I found it unique a qui'r new experience.

Sreekcati.

The sense with approximate

I am a regular reader of your good magazine. I haven't massed a single copy of it last

"Want, want, want" and
"cont, can't" seems to be
"contempetual refram between
condren and parents these
days

Wand a new copy, want new snoes, want dress, want losispop, want to play, want to fight, want new family car, want to watch cable TV all hours, want is too help, want to sleep, want new is ones has, want Munnay to wear her best to the bus stop at 6 a m, want Daddy to be polite always and not display anger - so what if it's our mistake.

And parents! All they CAN do is dispense "can'ts" You can't watch TV now. You can't go out to play. You CAN'T have a new dress You CAN'T eat "that" for dinner i CAN'T do everything for you Daddy can't.. CAN'T CAN'T. .RAVE RANT.

Where in the world did we

year. I read the magazine from our school library. To say frankly and honestly, I really appreciate it. It is a most interesting as well as a valuable guide for students like me. It is helping us a lot. I wish you and your team success in publishing of the magazine.

Byoy Kumar Thapa, Bhutan

I am a student of Class VIII and a regular reader of your magazine. I have found it to be 'abulous. It is written in very good language which can be easily understood. It has helped

pick up all these wants and can'ts? Where is the 'Queen of Sheeba' these days? Not long ago the world would spin to her commands and demands All one had to hear was the 'Queen of Sheeba wants' each demand or command being more challenging or outrageous than the last. And then began the mad scramble to meet those 'wants' as best as one could No room for can't here! The best part was, everybody got to be the Queen of Sheeba by turns. and 'want' whatever you fancied Tired of wants and hungry after giving full play to one's imagination and creative genius in trying to fulfil those 'wants', one happily wolfed down the appetising spread on the table, even if it was karelus, bhindi and salad And if the fenugreek leaves (methi ki sabzi) was too bitter - one didn't

accuse Mummy of

me to improve my language to a great extent. It is really wonderful for students of my age. I am very grateful to you all who are able to publish such an excellent magazine. I wish you more success in the years to come.

Ashım ('hakraborthy (14), Mıdnapur

I have been a regular reader of your magazine for children I appreciate the hono ir given to young poets and writers by the editor by publishing their preations.

Priyam Bhasin (13), New Delhi

plotting to choke you or 'want' her to give you something else. All you did was spread jam on the rate and eat it like it was a Swiss roll just been delivered to your order.

No time for 'want' or can't' here, because one was always in a hurry to get on to the next challenge. In fact so overactive was the imagination then, that even TV seemed dull by comparison! Imagine having the idiot box entertain you, when you could be with real live people—read, play, sing, dance, or be plain inventive.

And when Munimy's, Daddy's, Teacher's or any other grown-ups car'ts got too much in the way - the only reaction was "Wait till I grow-up"

Here's the February issue of Children's World - helping you make growing up - fun and worth its while!

CHILDREN'S WORLD FEBURARY 1993

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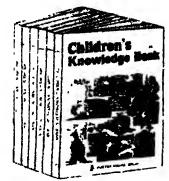


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Dear grins and grinnesses,

Sometimes the most amazing things can happen to a person and I'm not talking about ghosts and all that. I'm talking of everyday, ordinary life and of everyday, ordinary life and of everyday, ordinary things, like a tooth, for instance. Can you imagine anything more ordinary and everyday? A tooth! Just a plain, white tooth on the top leftside of my mouth

It was one of those late starters, that tooth Actually it was my mother who called it that — a late starter She said it should have got loose and fallen off long long ago but somehow it didn't It stayed Probably it liked me Probably it said to itself, "This chap is one of the few decent folk still left in the world Quite unlike that what's his name that he is forced to be friends with. If I was in that chap's mouth, if I had had the enormous bad luck to have sprouted in his mouth, I would have fallen off the next day."

Anyway, whatever its mysterious reasons, the tooth stayed on, long past the time when it should have gone and allowed a more fancy one to take its place It did me no harm, this little tooth, and on most days of the week, I even forgot to think about it. Which goes to show how all of us commit such terrible mistakes in our unthinking ways If only I had been kinder to that tooth, if only I had patted it now and then, if only...

Anyway, it was Diwali and amidst the general blaze and cracker of lights and fireworks, there was one major performance I had to go through. This was to go to my aunt's house, the very same aunt who eats nails for breakfast and thinks good manners is the only key to nirvana I was supposed to take sweets to her and wish her all happiness (gulp) for the festive season. Well, I kicked about it like mad, I can tell you. I said I was the wrong person, I had the wrong kind of hair and

teeth and knees. (My aunt can write a twelve page report on my knees). I even thought of suddenly developing an illness but it was Diwalı and I would have missed out on everything else. So I went.

The door was flung open as soon as I rang the bell -Iwas late by about ten seconds and my aunt fixed her bullet eyes on me as I wiped my shoes on the mat till the soles of my feet felt sore My knee caps were jumping about and my heart was pumping as if there was a terrible drought in that part of the country. I handed her the trav of sweets carefully. I think I also mumbled some words like "I festival you the wishes season" or something Anyway, she seemed pleased and asked me to sit and gave me some carrot halva to eat.

Now, as a rule, carrot halva ranks high in my list of favourite sweets. As long as I can forget its association with the vegetable. I quite like the softness and meltingness and the bites of nuts in it. But that day, in my aunt's house. I could think of nothing but carrot, the vegetable and brinial. the vegetable, and karela and spinach and the taste of cough mixture, the one without any fruit flavour. And all the while, my aunt went on with her pleasant chatter, about how she

would like to boil small boys in oil, particularly their arms and legs and particularly when they had had bad manners as most of them did and particularly when they showed no respect to their elders which most of them didn't and...

It was at that moment that I bit something hard. much harder than a nut. I put the spoon into my mouth, took it out again and in it, glistening and looking very innocent was my tooth - the one in the top left side of my mouth, the 'late starter' What was I do? I daren't tell my aunt anything about it, she'd probably dump me in the trash bin! I daren't leave it on the plate! I couldn't swallow it either Finally, I picked it up with more halva on to my spoon and put it back into my mouth. I kept it tucked away in my cheek and hurriedly gobbled up the last of the halva Finally. with infinite good manners, I took out my clean white handkerchief, pretended to



rub my lips and delicately spat out the tooth into the handkerchief and put both into my pocket Oh, the relief

My aunt had by then got to the level of condemning all schools and school systems and the state of the country. It was a good time for me to leave a got up, with my secret still in my pocket, rubbed my shoes again on the mat and moved out as gracefully as I could

In all the Diwali excitement that followed, I completely forgot my tooth. But this morning, as I emptied out my pockets, I found it—the late starter that almost choked me with embarrassment That's why one and all, be kind to your teeth.

Yours with fangs Perky.



THE MATIONAL POLICE WINGEUM

Text: Ashish Jaiswal (11) Photographs courtesy: National Police Museum

VERYBODY knows how two innocent children of New Delhi — Sanjay and Geeta Chopra, merely asked for a lift in a car, little realising that it would be their last journey. They were kidnapped, criminally assaulted and killed. But do you know how tough it was to work out the case, even for the expert sleuths of the Police department? As a result of which, with help from scientific-aid-toinvestigation — the criminals were hanged till death? You already know that the two highest bravery awards for children given by the Indian Council for Child Welfare are named after Sanjay and Geeta Chopra. But if you wish to know more about the methods utilised by the police to identify and establish the criminals - then walk straight to the newly established National Police Museum of CBI. New Delhi. It was a historic day for me when I visited this thrilling museum on a

day when my schoo! had a holiday.

A unique National Police Museum of Central Bureau of Investigation has been opened for public viewing with a variety of exhibits of national and international significance, explains Shri K.N. Gupta, Asst. Director (SP)/CBI, New Delhi. It contains several interesting and thought-provoking items — all related to the police force, crime and criminals — from the ancient to the modern. It also highlights the modus operandi of the criminals. the scientific-aids employed in investigation and detection of crime, the latest techniques adopted by the Central and State Forensic Science Laboratories/Central and State Finger Print Bureaus and so on. The exhibits have been acquired from different State and Central Police Organisations and are both of Indian and foreign origin. Truly a world of thrill and sensation.

Shrı Gupta further

adds — "It is a hard reality that Indian policemen had been performing excellent services amidst all odds - and it is a harsh reality that these very policemen do not enjoy the same affection and reverence. respect and love in the society as is conferred on the members of other professions The preservers of law and order in society are often termed as law-breakers It is carnestly hoped that this museum shall serve as a bridge between the police and society and the distance between the two shall become narrower"

The National Police
Museum was formally
inaugurated by Shri
Vijay Karan, then Director CBI on January 1,
1991. In fact it was earlier
called the CBI Museum
The Museum is situated in
the CGO (Central Government Offices) Complex,
near Nehru Stadium,
Lodi Road, New Delhi
and is open to the public
on every Monday and
Thursday from 10 a.m.

to 5 p.m. There is no admission fee. Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday are reserved for the members of the armed forces, police, para-military and the like. The museum is closed on Saturday and Sunday.

The National Police Museum is packed with a variety of interesting and thought provoking articles from ancient guns and pistols to fake and genuine currency notes, stuffed toys used for smuggling contraband to forged signatures of VIP's, valuable art pieces, laser lamps and ultra-violet lamps which can detect forged entries on cheques by highlighting areas on cheques where erasing and rewriting have been done. There are rare paintings too.

Apart from these 'sensational' items the Mu-

seum also displays police uniforms, badges and police paraphernalia.

Under the Badge section, one can see cap badges of different State Police in India and also foreign countries including cap badges and shoulder badges of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, ICPO badges, Ottawa (gifted to India) and turban badges of different Indian States. Police flags of foreign countries including the flags of Chile, Korea, Finland, Indonesia and USA police, along with their badges are on display TIPs, ICPO/ Interpol and Austria, too find a place in this section.

Brass medallions from Japan (Metropolitan Police, Tokyo) and silver medallions of Mexico, stand out.

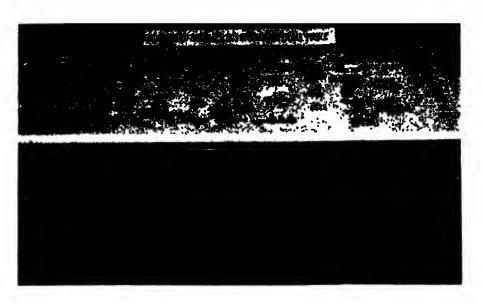
The souvenir section has a plaque from the

National Police Academy, Kenya Police, the Hague, Denmark, Saudi Arabia and Hong Kong police.

There are uniforms of police officers from different States of India as well as abroad, including Germany, Kenya, Uganda, Cyprus and the Nigerian police.

In the Arms (weaponary) section, there are ancient guns and pistols, axes, bows, bullet proof vests, helmets and bullets of different calibre used by security forces in India. There are arms belonging to the Mughal and Medieval period such as the Gupti, Katarium 'a weapon used by tribals) pen-type pistol, watchtype revolver (country made), .303 countrymade guns and other pistols/ revolvers of different bores and calibres, country-made improvised pistol, handmade improvised long SBBL gun, countrymade 2" mortar gun muzzle loading and pump type pistol etc. The replica of a hand grenade which was used in a plot to kill some VIPs in the 1970's can also be seen.

The modern equipment and scientific-aid section, there are startling items like the twoway-mirror, portable folding road barrier,



CHILDREN'S WORLD FEBURARY 1993

Beam light (Burglar's alarm), Security shock rod and other interesting exhibits. The latest crowd control instrument acquired from USA is among some of the interesting gadgetry on display in the museum. It works by giving mild shocks and emitting light that temporarily controls an angry mob.

How many types of counterfeit currency notes and coins do you know? There are forged currency notes from Rs.100 to one rupee and genuine notes of higher denominations of Rs.10,000, Rs.5000. Counterfeit foreign currency exhibits include a British Postal Order and some U.S. dollars. One rupee coins with King George VI picture, one rupee coin with Queen Victoria's picture, eight anna coins, four anna and two anna coins are also exhibited. The specimens



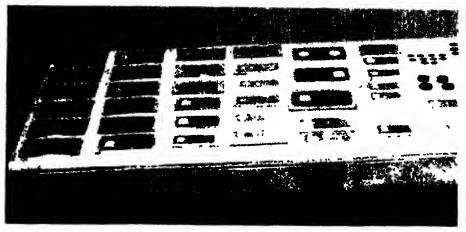
of genuine notes (without number) of different denominations were made available by the Reserve Bank of India.

There are rare antiques as well. One idol of Chanwardhari, made of white marble stone, measuring about 55 cms of the 11th or 12th century AD recovered from Jhunjhanu, Rajasthan, is valued at about Rs.25,000. an appropriate time. There are two male red stone idols. Besides, the brass idols of Shanker-Parvati. Krishna and Vishnu of considerable

antique value also attract the visitor. At present only such antiques have been exhibited in the museum whose cases have already been decided by the courts. Apart from these, there are a large number of priceless antiques in CBI custody, cases of which are pending trial. These will also be exhibited at

There are photographs of forged as well as genuine signatures of VVIPs, such as Giani Zail Singh (former President of India) and Smt. Indira Gandhi.

Among the important Urdu Hukumnamas are photographs of an FIR concerning Mahatma Gandhi's assassination. (FIR No. 68/48) dated 31.1.1948 u/s 302 IPC against Nathu Ram Godse. There is another older one, against the torch-bearer of the



Indian freedom struggle-Shahid Bhagat Singh (FIR No. 113/29) dated 8.4.1929 u/s 307 IPC.

Charts relating to crimes under different heads, housebreaking implements, a wall clock (40 tolas of gold concealed inside), wristwatches, shoes used for concealing gold jewellery, battery cells (with six to seven pieces of wristwatches concealed in each cell). cycle forks and other apparatus used for purposes of smuggling gold and gold ornaments and so on - the list of fascinating objects on

display is neverending.

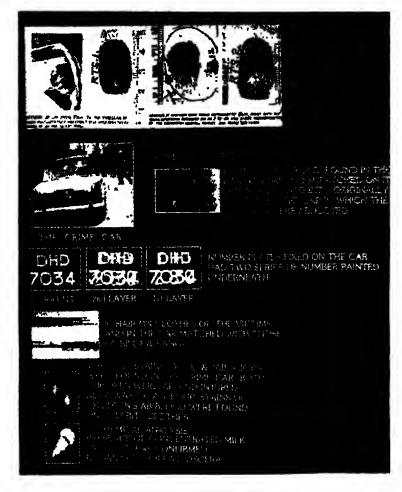
In the fingerprints and photographs section, there are photographs of age old fingerprints made available by CFPB and CFSL. Photographs of two sets of finger impressions of a pair of twins prove that no two human beings can have similar finger prints. Photographs of a fingerprint on a forged will that saved the legal heirs from being deprived of ancestral property in one case, can be seen here. The world's oldest fingerprint can be seen in one photographic print. The rare

pattern of a fingerprint, the finger and palm prints of Sir William Herschel taken in 1860 and 1890, photographs of fingerprints of Shah Jahan's Royal Hand and seal all find a place here. Photographs of tattoo-marks on human skin for identification in tribals are also on display. The Bertillon system of identification, photographs of the effect of plastic surgery for mutilating fingerprints and photographs of the fingerprints of monkeys as compared to human fingerprints are some other interesting identification items used by the police that can be viewed here.

The museum also consists of exhibits like portable fingerprint kits, forged High School Certificates, photographs of re-used court fee stamps and postal stamps.

The portrait of Major General Sleeman, who not only outwitted the 'thuggees' but who conceptualised the Intelligence, can be seen here. There are a series of paintings of that period indicating the manner in which 'thuggees' of Central India duped and killed their victims.

There are also exhibits



on boards, displaying the sensational bank van robbery case, among others and the photograph of the Palika Bazaar dynamite case — one of the deadliest bombs was kept in the air-conditioning unit of Palika Bazaar in 1982 but was defused in time. It had created a panic in the entire Connaught Place, literally the centre of New Delhi.

To go back to the Chopra children murder case, there are different charts and boards displaying photographs of Miss Geeta and Master Sanjay found missing on 26.8.1978, their putrefied dead bodies with stab wounds discovered on 29.8.1978. The murder weapons, photographs of the culprits Billa and Ranga, photographs of fingerprints of the accused, and physical decipherment - extra number plate found in the car with HRK 8950 scratched on it. This number had been originally noticed on the car in which the children were abducted There is a photograph of the crime car number DHD 7034. The number plate fixed on the car had two series of numbers painted underneath the current, a second layer



and first layer.

There are also photographs of hair on the clothes of the victims and in the car that matched with those of Billa and Ranga and blood stains of 'A' and 'AB' group found in the crime car. Both children were 'AB' group and the injured Billa was of 'A' group and stains of the children's 'AB' were found on the culprits clothes.

What can be better appreciation of the good job done by the experts in this case, than the few words written by the

trial court itself.
Shri M.K. Chawla, then
Additional Session Judge,
Delhi in his judgement
dated 7.4 1979 as displayed here says:

"My observations on the performance of the investigating agency would not be complete without a word of praise for experts of the Central Forensic Science Laboratory who made a most valuable contribution in the investigation in this case."

One look at all the items on display in the

museum can help one estimate as to how painstaking a job it is, to unearth an organised gang of culprits, murderers, terrorists and smugglers.

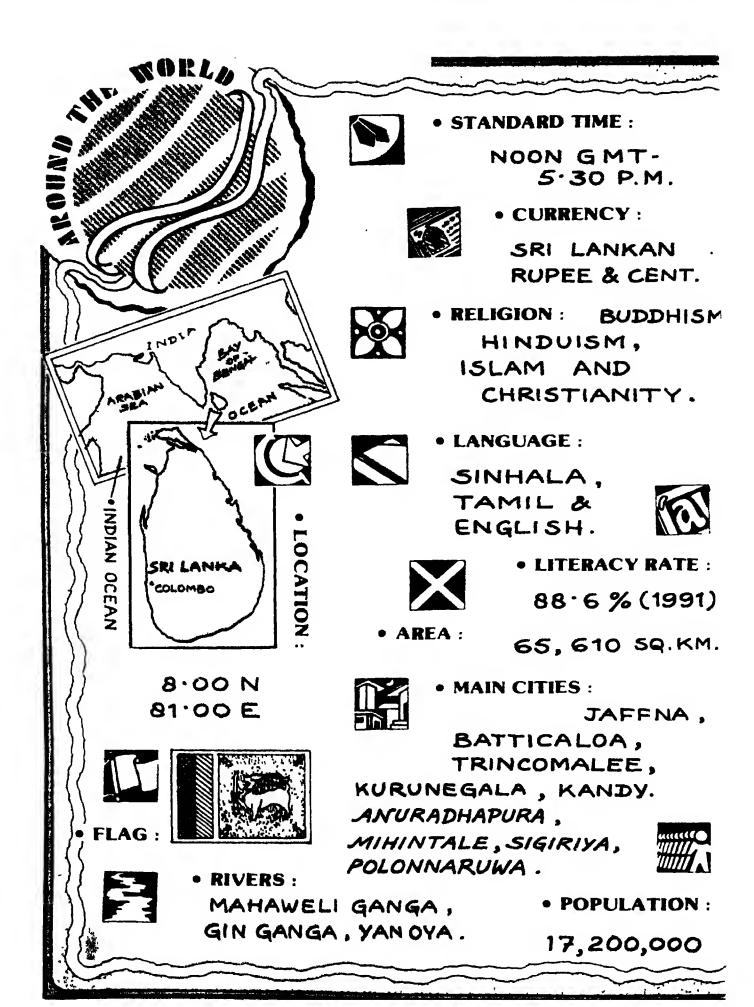
The National Police

Museum sure takes us into a world of thrills and sensation. There is a lesson to learn in it too. Committing a crime may be 'easy' to plan and execute. But the museum is proof of the fact that

shrewder brains, aided with 'detection equipment' can catch a crook faster than he can commit a crime.

rime.







OVERNMENT:



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PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRATIC STATE.



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DEC. 14,1955.



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CINNAMOM,

COCONUT, CARDAMOM,

RUBBER , TOBACCO.



• EXPORTS :

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NATURAL RESOURCES :

LIMESTONE, GRAPHITE, GEMS.



• IMPORTS :

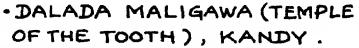
DRUGS PETROLEUM,



PLACES

OF INTEREST

MACHINERY, CHEMICALS.



• THE SACRED BO TREE ,
ANURADHAPURA . • QUEEN'S
HOUSE, COLOMBO.





· SATINWOOD, TEAK,

JAK& MILLA, EBONY.

• ELEPHANT, LEOPARD, PLOVER, TERNS.

\$ J

• NATIONAL DAY:

FEBRUARY 4.

INDEPENDENCE COMME MORATION DAY



Designed by—RAVILAITI

The ungrateful erocodile

Text: O.P. Bhagat Illustrations: R. Ashish Bagchi

NCE there was a crocodile. It lived in a hole which it had made in the bank of a village pond.

When it felt hungry, it one. went into the water and "I caught fish. After eating, it returned to its hole in again the bank. mud

One summer, as the heat increased, the pond dried up. The mouth of the crocodile's hole shrank and a lot of dried mud choked it.

The crocodile tried to go out, but could not. It struggled, yet it found no way out. Hungry and helpless, it lay down, waiting for the end to come.

At that very moment he heard the sound of footsteps near the hole. "Help me!" it cried aloud. "Help me, please!"

The sound came from the footsteps of a man passing by. The cry for help made him stop. He looked around, but saw no one.

"I am trapped in my hole," called the crocodile again. "Remove some mud from its mouth, and I shall be out."

Moved by the distress in the voice, the man decided to help whatever was caught inside. He opened the hole. Out came the crocodile.

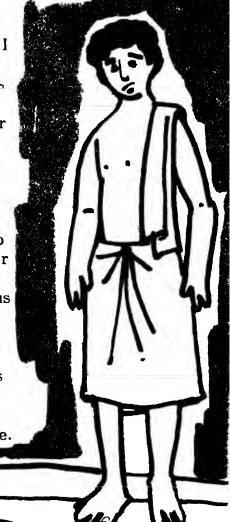
It looked so weak that the man pitied it all the more. "I shall take you to the stream that flows over there," he said. And he carried the crocodile on his shoulders

As he was releasing it into the stream, the crocodile seized the man's arm with its strong jaws.

"What are you doing?" asked the man in surprise.

"I am hungry," said the crocodile. "I am going to eat you"

"But I saved your life," said the man. "This is not the way to reward your saviour."



The words had no effect on the crocodile.

"Ask anyone you like," continued the man, "and they will tell you how unfair you are being to me."

The crocodile agreed. "But you must hurry up," it said. "I am hungry and cannot wait much."

They looked about. The first thing they saw was a tree. "We shall ask the tree," said the man.

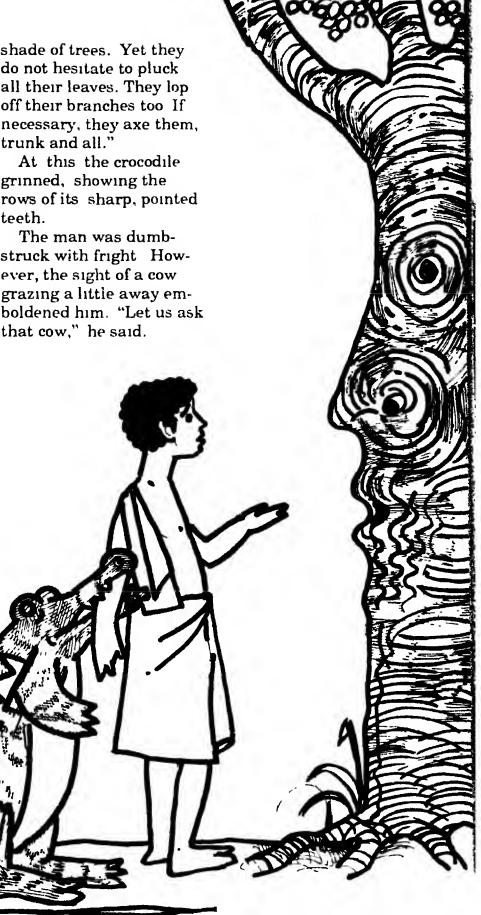
The man told the tree how the crocodile had called for help and he had freed it from its prison-like hole. "But now it wants to eat me," said the man. "Tell it what gratitude is."

"Gratitude!" mocked the tree. "Are men ever grateful? They sit in the cool

shade of trees. Yet they do not hesitate to pluck all their leaves. They lop off their branches too If necessary, they axe them, trunk and all."

At this the crocodile grinned, showing the rows of its sharp, pointed

The man was dumbstruck with fright However, the sight of a cow grazing a little away emboldened him. "Let us ask



The two walked up to the cow. The man repeated his story and asked the gentle-looking animal whether it was fair on the crocodile's part to eat him.

"Fair! Did you say that?" said the cow, suddenly roused to ire. "But men are never fair." And it related how its owner, who milked it daily, did not give it enough in return.

The crocodile grinned again as the cow walked away. The man had no desire to go to anyone else for a third opinion. For he did not expect it to favour him.

Just then a jackal came sauntering there. In spite of what he had decided, the man asked it what he felt in his case.

"How can I say anything?" asked the jackal, "unless I see for myself how and where it happened. The crocodile did not object to the jackal's inspecting the pond and its hole. As before, the man carried the crocodile on his shoulders and they made for the pond.

"So this is the hole," remarked the jackal after a look at the crocodile's cave. He turned to the crocodile and said, "Now I would like to see how you, with your large body, fitted in this hole and how its mouth was blocked with mud."

asked the crocodile from inside.
"Yes, I am," replied the iackal. "Now you are

"Are you satisfied?"

"Yes, I am," replied the jackal. "Now you are trapped as before and cannot get out."

The man admired the jackal's cleverness.

"Don't leave it at that," said the jackal to the man. "Or the crocodile will try to harm some other innocent creature. Take a stout stick and beat all the ingratitude out of it."





Text and photographs: Lina Acca Mathew (15)

ARAH is a Pakistani — somebody an Indian can never be friends with?
But Sarah wasn't "unfriendly" at all. She was my best friend.

I was born in Nigeria. When my family was transferred to Kufena college, Wusasa, Zaria, from Malumfashi, in 1980, my sole companions were the fun-loving Chichi and her younger brother, and two other Nigerian sisters.

There was a mysterious house opposite Chichi's abode. A bush full of pink and white roses stood below one of its front windows, and a jasmine shrub grew near its garage. Chichi imparted to me the message that there dwelt a Pakistani Muslim family in that house.

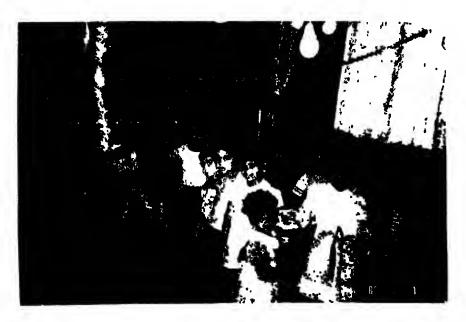
Muslims seemed very mysterious to us in those early years of our lives, in spite of the fact that Kufena College was situated among people of the Hausa tribe, who were mainly Muslims,

and that every evening we could hear the words Allaho Akbar intoned by someone in the College mosque. And those plump, fair Muslim women who weren't Africans, and who wore pyjama-like clothes, like our Papas at night, seemed all the more mysterious to us. They also aroused our curiosity by usually speaking some foreign language, or speaking English with a thick accent, emphasising the 'th's,' unlike the rounded way the Africans spoke.

One day, while we were playing 'Catchers', we saw a girl of our age who looked like an Indian, holding a sea of magnificent round multicoloured balloons. As we were all balloon-lovers, we ran to befriend her. But we also loved breaking them. Along with their owner, we pricked all the balloons in delight and covered our ears while they exploded.

This girl told us that she lived in the 'mystery' house and was moving out the following day. Her family was packing up. She had run out to give everything a final look. I was disappointed to lose a new-found friend. She also told us the name of her friend coming to live in this mystery house — Sarah Ahmad

Sarah was fair and pretty She was three years older than I. She had short straight hair,



Lina, the author, with Praveen Chichi, Sarah and her other Nigerian friends

and compared to me, spent a lot of time brushing it with an elegant, soft hair-brush. She usually wore the frocks she had grown out of over a pair of pyjamas while at home. She was very neat about her appearance, unlike me, who didn't bother how my hair stood on end, or whether the hem of my frock was properly stitched or not. Sarah had a quarrelsome big sister Sameera, and was always at daggers drawn with her.

Sarah's father, Mr. Ahmad, taught Geography in Kufena College. Her mother, whom I called 'Aunty' was a born seamstress. She always wore salwar kameezes, and had a wide range of different coloured lipsticks. I liked her, but was a little scared of her. But, sad to say, this fear didn't save me from disobeying her commands at times.

Sarah and I had a friend called Praveen. He was my neighbour, and was a Keralite, one year my senior. The three of us went to St. Bartholomew's School; the oldest school in Zaria. Every morning Praveen and I would walk to Sarah's house with our school boxes.

Then, accompanied by Sarah and Sameera, we would cross the railway line which ran outside the College campus, and trudge to the nearby St. Barth.

Praveen and I had an awful habit While waiting for Sarah, we would pluck the unripe baby guavas from the trees in the backyard, thus evoking Aunty's rage. Those guava trees were the pride of Aunty's life, and she took special pains in tending them. One day, after a degree more than the usual bout of scoldings for picking the tiny guavas, Praveen and I decided to revolt. We grabbed our school boxes. and without waiting for Sarah, walked off in a huff, our noses in the air, saying that we hated such stupid guavas, and they tasted horrible, and if Aunty hated us, well and good, we wouldn't go near her house again. But, seeing us stalking away, and perceiving the reason for our out of the ordinary behaviour, Aunty sent Sarah after us and called us back. She pacified our agitated young minds and gave us a banana to give Sarah at break-time in school. I was to keep the banana in

my box, and Praveen was to give it. We were only four and five years old, so we were happy to perform a good deed for Sarah, our heroine. We went away joyfully with Sarah, though we were quite late for school

Prayeen and I were always wrangling with each other. We would have severed our friendship for weeks if Sarah hadn't been there. She was our uniting force, the very model of our lives. We looked up to her for support, and fell for every word she uttered. We even yied with each other to win her favour Each of us considered ourselves to be Sarah's right hand man.

Later on Praveen's parents were transferred to another college in Zaria Sarah became my constant companion. She taught me how to climb trees, and how to climb up the poles, which had no footholds. in the football field. It was in Sarah's house that I got acquainted with books like Head, and Black Beauty. She also gave me Famous Fives, The Five-Find-Outers and Dog and the Faraway Tree books to read, thus introducing me to the world of fantasy



From left to right: Next to the lady in a sari, Lina, with Sameera standing behind her. On the right, Sarah is the tallest of the three children.

and adventure. She had many dolls, and we would play with them in the cardboard doll-house Sameere Lad carved out of cartous. She had many puzzles and games, a miniature toy sewingmachine which could work, a number of toy pots and pans, a toy cooking range which used to work formerly, in fact, a cupboard full of toys. She was an excellent gardener, and told me what to do to help plants breathe and grow. She loved animals, especially cats. There was a fairly large henhouse amidst the guava trees in Sarah's back-vard.

in which a fat, ferocious hen, like the ones seen in picture books, lived.

Whenever the hen's eggs hatched, Sarah and I would troop to the henhouse, where Sarah would crawl beside the hen and slip her hand under it. Then she would extract one chick for me to hold. The hen was always angry to see me, and I was afraid of it. But it loved Sarah.

Sarah's ambition was to become a vet or an acrobat. I naturally adopted that as my ambition, though I wondered whether I had enough brains to become a vet.

and how I could perform acrobatics with all that fat on!

Alas! good things never last. In 1985, we moved to Alhudahuda College in Zaria, where we stayed for a year. We met the Ahmads two or three times. When we last visited them in July 1986, before leaving for India for good, Sarah was ill in bed.

Sarah was lonely after I had left Kufena College. Moreover, I was now studying in Zaria Children's School, not in St. Barth, and so wouldn't meet her every day. Once, when we went to

Kufena to visit our former neighbours, Mr. Kuriakose and family, I saw Sarah standing aloof, watching her neighours — three or four Pakistani brothers playing together.

Sarah, is now in Pakistan. I don't know her address. I shall always remember her with love and gratitude.

We make friends and lose them. They are inconstant. I know this from personal experience.

These days I'm pining for Sarah. I don't know why. Tomorrow is Sarah's birthday — November 5.

Friends come and friends go. I've lost all contact with Sarah. But my friendship with her is one which shall never cease in my heart.





What is India?
A land with large boundaries
and its numerous men and women.
Or its rivers, mountains, valleys, deserts
and plains

or a developing nation?

A paradise on earth with a rich, glorious past,

As old as the earth and until it lasts,
A smiling beckoning future and a new
face

which we eagerly wait to embrace.

Where people regard themselves brothers,
sisters, friends and Indians and
Then Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Buddhists
and Christians

With tradition and culture blended with 'Indianness'

which gives each Indian his spirit, strength and firmness.

Such unity in diversity, so powerful Faiths, beliefs, relations, culture, work, activity

so coherent, so harmonious, so lively.

A heaven, with all of Nature's blessings
and wealth.

So charming, rich, beautiful, youthful, yet so simple.

Is there a country as great as mine so great as India, its values and its times? No, I think perhaps not, And this makes me raise my head proudly

as an Indian.

Sunita Jadli (16)



Story: G.C. Prasad

OU will surely not disagree with me when I observe that the newspapers contain nothing but bad news these days.

Conflict in every part of the world (mini-wars, they call them), terrorism, drug epidemics, crime, famine in Africa, floods in Indo-China, earthquakes, deforestation, oil spills, chemical and nuclear accidents, depletion of the ozone layer, global warming, you name it.

You can say I'm as seized by despair as anyone else. I read the papers only because my job demands it, and that's perhaps why I noticed the small advertisement on page 7 of the Sunday Times.

"Wanted: Super-heroes" it was titled. Intrigued, I read on.

"If you have superpowers, if you can do things that other mortals can't, you could be useful in a good purpose. Contact P O. Box 9074".

I grinned. Some kind of a gag, I said to myself, I wonder who'll reply. Then I found myself reaching for my writing pad and an envelope.

Don't get me wrong. I have none of those superpowers, whatever they

Illustrations: R.Ashish Bagchi

might be It's just that I'm a columnist for the New Indian Scientist, and this advertisement had aroused my scientific curiosity.

I had to get to the bottom of this. I wrote a short note introducing myself and asking for an interview This was the first step. I was sure I wouldn't receive a reply. If this wasn't a strictly-above-board affair (and I was sure it wasn't), there was no way the people behind it would want to talk to the press.

And so I was pleasantly surprised to receive a letter the next week inviting me to the home of one Mr. Homi Taraporewalla for a "chat", as the letter put it It was signed by Mr. Taraporewalla himself.

Bombay is quite a nice city overall, but there are parts that look like scenes of hurricane devastation.

Mr. Taraporewalla had chosen a particularly cheerless part of Vikhroli for his domicile.

His old and decrepit house stood right next to an effluent stream from a nearby factory. Black, poisoned earth stretched out on all sides. The air was thick with factory fumes and automobile exhaust from the nearby highway. The level of noise was intolerable, too. The local trains clattered and screeched along the Central Railway lines just beyond the dirty creek, and the slum colony nearby completed the picture of urban hell.

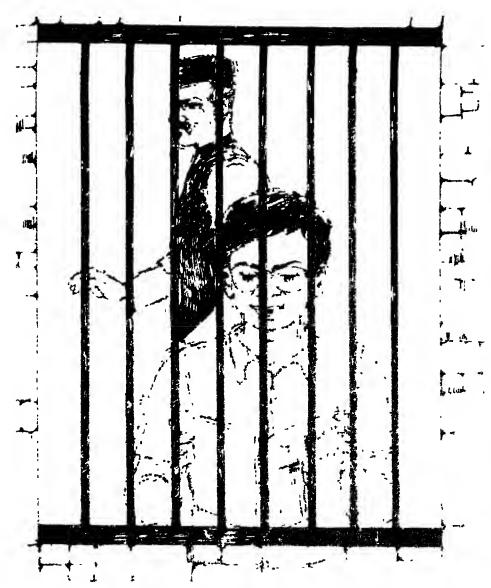
I was buffetted and jostled by the crowds pouring out of the railway station as I walked in the afternoon heat towards the house. Weeds, nearly a metre high, choked the path, near the house and I cursed as I ploughed through them.

An old, decrepit man, looking every inch the Parsi he was, stood at a window, staring at me as I approached.

"Mr. Taraporewalla?" I asked and introduced myself. The old man muttered something but didn't move. He kept staring at me and I grew quite uncomfortable. I repeated my introduction and showed him his letter.

He said nothing, and his expression didn't change, but he got out from his place behind the window and opened the front door. Then he went back in without even asking me in.

I shrugged and entered. He was rearranging a heap



of clothes on the bed as I walked in.

"What do you want? Why do you want to talk to me?" he asked in highly-accented Hindi.

I reminded him of his advertisement.

"Yes, yes! Super-powers! Superman! We need people with super-powers to save the world!" he yelled in English. "Do you have super-powers? Are you super-man?" he asked, staring myopically at me through thick glasses.

Embarrassed, I explained again that I worked

for a science magazine, and was interested in talking to him about what he was doing, for the benefit of the magazine's readers. Already, I was beginning to regret having started this "investigation". The whole thing was clear to me now.

A senile old man had put out a crazy advertisement. That was all. I wondered how quickly I could make my exit But in no time at all, I changed my mind again, for the old man hobbled to a cupboard, pulled out a huge pile of comics, and dumped them on the bed.

Now, my readers should not judge me harshly when I say I have never outgrown comics. I've passed college and have been working for a year and a half, but I still have a terrible weakness for that "illiterature", as its critics call it.

I am particularly addicted to science-fiction and fantasy comics, tales of outer space and monsters and yes, super-heroes. And what the old man had placed in front of me was the stuff of all my childhood dreams.

"Superman! Spiderman! Wonder-woman! Aqua-man!" he read out in a cackling voice as he lifted each one and tossed it towards me, "The Fantastic Four! Hawkman! Iron man!"

"Have you read these?" he asked me.

I nodded, but didn't look up. I was already engrossed in them.

On the cover of one, Superman stood chained to a wall, while a green-andyellow monster went around tearing up buildings. Superman was asking plaintively, "This monster from Sqrrm will destroy the world! How can I stop it?"

It was pretty tame really, "escapist fare", as sophisticated readers would say, but I enjoyed such themes all the same.

Mr. Taraporewalla brought me back to reality by tapping the cover picture with his hand.

"All useless super-heroes!"

he exclaimed. "None of them can save the earth!"

"That's true," I agreed and sermonised to him, "We humans can and should solve our own problems. We cannot expect our problems to be solved by some sort of super-beings..."

"No!" he snapped, "Human beings cannot save this world! Human beings have destroyed this world! Only super-heroes can save it, but not such super-heroes!

I shrugged and looked at him. "What can these fellows do?" He gestured angrily towards the comics, "They only have power to destroy! Super-strength! He can burn anything! Super-breath! He can blow down buildings! Can he do anything useful?"

"Well, these are just stories..." I began. "Let's not take them too seriously..."

He paid no attention, but continued his ranting.

"These super-heroes survive only because of super-villains. If there were no villains, these fellows would be unemployed!"

"What is the use of all these powers, then? "What kind of powers did you talk about in your advertisement?" I asked.

He fell silent, then spoke very quickly and with deep emotion, "The power to heal, the power to build, the power to make things grow."

"Do you really need super-powers to do these things?" I asked. "We have made enough scientific progress to do all these things. If we are more disciplined, if we all plant more trees, if we..."

"If, if, if!" he cried again, "when will you realise we have reached the point of no return? You cannot save the forests, there are too many people who need firewood. You cannot stop pollution, you cannot prevent overcrowding and crime, economic factors are just too strong! All your science will not stop this decay!"

"That's not true," I said,
"just last year, for instance
we carried an article on
smokeless chulhas that
consume only a third as
much firewood as conventional stoves. You see,
scientific advancements will
one day solve all these
problems."

"Too late, it is too late!"
the old man shook his head,
"all these inventions came
too late, when the damage is
already done. We need
people with super-powers
who can prevent damage,
who can reverse damage."

"Have you found any?" I asked.

"Many," he replied sadly, "but they all operate alone, and they suffer from daily human problems themselves—poverty, disease, social pressures...I want to bring together these people, direct them, so that they can help the world more effectively.

"You know, my friend,

there is a man I know.
Wherever he goes, the crime rate drops down. Is it not a super-power? But he is suffering from tuberculosis, poor fellow and will die within a year, if someone doesn't pay for his treatment.

"There is a girl who is clairvoyant. A child was recently kidnapped in her neighbourhood. She knew where the child was, but was afraid to tell the police.

They would not believe her. Or worse, they might think she was in league with the kidnappers. And then, people are so supertitious. They might shun her and not treat her properly if they knew about her power.

"What can these superpeople do?"

"That's very interesting," I said "I'd like to get in touch with these people, and investigate these phenomena you talked about."

"Investigate, investigate! Is that all you worry about? Will you even give ten rupees to buy this man medicines? This is why science will not work. There is no heart in science!"

"I'm sorry," I said, genuinely ashamed. "I didn't mean to be callous. If there's something I could do to help, I'll be happy to, in my personal capacity, of course."

He shook his head sadly and went back to staring out of the window. There was an uncomfortable silence for a few minutes. Then I was startled by a loud miaow. Three cats trooped into the room, in single file. They went upto Mr. Taraporewalla and rubbed themselves against his legs, miaowing all the while.

The old man reached down and stroked them, talking quietly as he did so

"So you stayed out all night Blackie? Where did you go? Ah, you're hungry, no? I'll give you your food, now don't shout..."

I watched quietly while Mr. Taraporewalla poured out some food into a large tray He stood there, just watching, while the cats ate

"Did you receive any replies to your advertisement?" I asked finally

"Only one so far," he replied after a long pause, "A fellow who could start fires. He showed me He could induce spontaneous combustion. I asked him, "What is the use of this?" and he went away hanging his head."

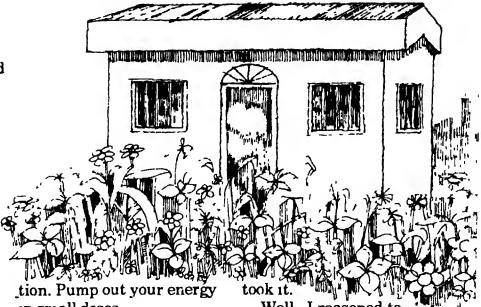
"How do you define useful super-powers?" I asked

He was silent again, then said. "A nuclear reactor is a well-behaved cousin of an atom bomb"

He repeated it twice more for my benefit, "A nuclear reactor is a well behaved cousin of an atom bomb.

"Do you see what it means?

"It means you don't spend all your energy in one burst Then you have only destruc-



in small doses.

"Look at these comics These super-heroes are good people, no doubt, but they spend their energy in violent bursts My God, so much violence[†]

"We need energy that is gentle and creative, not violent and destructive. Why can't there be a comic about a man who reduces the crime rate of a locality by his very presence? Because it wouldn't be "interesting", there's no glamour in it, it's too passive and boring And because a superhero who can do this is not a muscular fellow in a colourful costume, but a thin, wasted man coughing his life out in a hovel!"

We were silent again. The cats, having had their fill, were quietly filing out, licking their lips.

I rose to go, saying I would keep in touch. Rather embarrassedly, I handed him a little money, as much as my budget would allow. "This is for the man with TB." I said, and he quietly

Well, I reasoned to myself, even if the poor fellow doesn't have superpowers, he's still suffering, and that should be reason enough to help him.

It had been a weird after-noon As I neared the local railway station, I looked back at the house.

Funny, I hadn't noticed it before. The soil was black, poisoned by years of industrial effluent pollution, and no plants grew in this area. But Mr. Taraporewalla's house was at the centre of a patch of bright green foliage which extended outwards, reclaiming the polluted earth, inch by inch They weren't weeds, after all, they were plant life, thriving on poisoned soil, and bringing back health to their part of the Earth.

Mr. Taraporewalla was standing on his porch, talking to his cats, and stroking them. And the small white flowers of the plants around bobbed and danced in the wind, like Wordsworth's daffodils.

CHOCOLO CITATION OF COLO

How Never To Lose

Text: Vinita Agarwal Illustrations: Deepak Harichandən

is why, after a few games ous moves it is virtually impossible to lose. That of winning is to catch an There is no sure-shot though by knowing the correct response to varigame. The only chance noughts and crosses alformula for winning at any two astute players unwary opponent in a will find themselves drawing game after trap.

OPENING MOVE

Suppose you place an X in a corner, and your op-1. Corner Opening:

ponent puts his O in the

corner beneath it:

with a diagonal line, and threatens your opponent he no choice but to place If you place your next X in the opposite corner from the first, this his O in the centre.

		×
	0	
X		0

The moment he does maining corner leaving your opponent trapped Put your X in the rethis you are a winner.

		X
	0	
<		0

Whatever he does	now, you are bound to	win with a complete line	of Xs either along the top	or down the first column.
Whatever he	now, you are t	win with a com	of Xs either alo	or down the firs

2. Centre Opening:

of placing his O on any of If he makes the mistake your sides, it is simple to does not seize a corner. A centre opening can win, if your opponent also lead to a definite trap him.

×			X	0	×
	×	0		X	0
		0			0
			>	0	
	×	0		X	0
					0

Never a loser tactics:

If you have the second move, the way to block any of the three basic opening moves, and so force a draw, is to avoid the shaded squares as shown below



TEE

A child when born
Looks out for a helping hand,
a hand on which he can rely
on which he can lay his head and
cry

He has no other means to talk
he is not even able to walk.
he lies all alone in his cradle
in his eyes there is always a twinkle
he is curious, he is inquisitive
he wants to know the ways to live
he finds everything beautiful
his world is limited to his room
full.

An old man waiting for death looks out for a helping hand a hand on which he can rely

on which he can lay his head and cry

he has no one on his side to talk
he has to use crutches to walk
he lies all alone in his bed
I want to live more he never said
He is regretful, he is lonely
a few words of love he wants only
His life ending so gradually
he wants for his end in his room so
smelly.

Thus the cycle of life forever continues-

from the lighted steps of birth to the darkened depths of death.

Samina Sulmaz (14)



HE night was quiet with an eerie kind of stillness.
The owls went two-whoowhoo. Nisha and I peered into the dense compound.

"Hurrah!" Nisha breathed "This place is dynamite."

I stood beside her, warily pushing my sweaty hands into my pockets. "This place is really haunted," I whispered croakily "I'm willing to bet a whole year's supply of chocolate bars on that." I was probably right. The place was right out of a scene of the scariest movie in town.

The building that lay in ruins was miles away from the nearest habitation. It was way off from Nisha's grandmother's house. Nisha's grandmother did not have the least idea that we were not at home at that hour—ten o'clock in the night. She had first mentioned this place during lunch that day, telling us how the village ers thought it was haunted.

Nisha and I had exchanged glances. Seeing Nisha's eyes brighten with anticipation a vague feeling of uneasiness stirred in me.

"Forget what you heard," I had said in a warning undertone and had received a kick under the dining table. You tell Nisha not to do something and that will be exactly what she does.

"Just think of the story we can narrate to everyone when we get back to school after vacation,"
Nisha's voice had dripped with excitement. "This is the big one. You've got to face it or you'll regret it for the rest of your life."

Of course I was not scared now. Terrified, was more like it. Next time I have to listen to Nisha's ideas I will plug my ears. We crept down the path, our first steps astoundingly loud in the darkness. Hey! This was my favourite thing, next to getting report cards signed and facing surprise tests of course.

Nisha looked suddenly

doubtful. "What if this place is not really haunted?"

She shot me a desperate look. "See, there is nothing creepy about this building once you move closer."

"Looks can be deceptive," I said feeling tiny shivers of fear crawl down my spine.

"Yeah, I hope so,"
Nisha nonchalantly flung
the door open. "This is
pure drudgery."

As we just stepped in, a cool draught escaped outside. Terror flared in me like sheet lightning in a summer sky. I clutched Nisha, my heart hammering wildly. Nisha raised her eyebrows at me. "Not bad, huh?"

Inside, the room looked bleak with forlorn cobwebs all over the place. A dirty table-cloth was draped wearily over one table. The picture was pretty desolate. Nothing to worry about really. Nothing to feel scared about but I could still give you twenty, thirty reasons.

A little mouse scurried into one corner. 'Oh,' I said to myself, just pretend it never happened. It sure won't happen again '

Before I could manage to convince myself, Nisha remarked in a mock. awed tone, "Can you hear the wind whistling through the windows?"

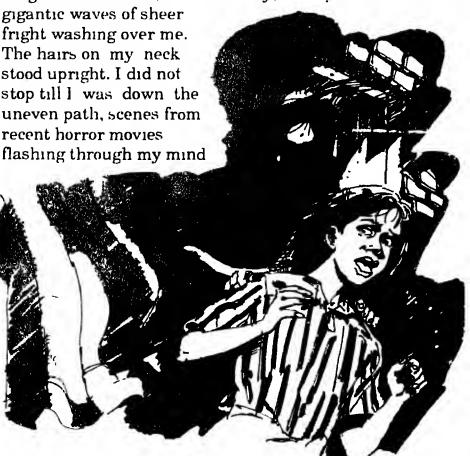
"Oh, never mind that," I said in a trembling voice. "We have enough grief without bringing that up."

Suddenly I felt a movement near the window. 'Here comes the evil, floating, grotesque figure,' I thought secretly torturing myself. 'That would teach Nisha not to fool with supernatural types.'

When I paused to look, there was something so blatantly white lurking at the window with a startling resemblance to what I had visualised, I gave a terrified "H-e-e-elp" and lunged for the door, gigantic waves of sheer fright washing over me. The hairs on my neck stood upright. I did not stop till I was down the uneven path, scenes from

Something grabbed my shoulder and I went hay-wire. I struck out in a frenzy and saw Nisha rolling her eyes at me in suppressed amusement. "Hey, your escape was hilarious," she was laughing uncontrollably now.

She paused, grinned and continued, "Actually you're right to get away so fast. I can guess why you took to your heels. The place nearly bored me to tears. Then the stupid white curtain flapping at the window did it! It didn't even resemble a ghost. The villagers perhaps think it's a big joke to call this place haunted. I do find it funny, don't you!?"



'IONS' of Intellect

The word 'ions' represents electrically charged particles formed in gas by an electric discharge. As a suffix 'ion' denotes action or condition.

How many words ending in 'ion' can you fill in?
A score of 10-15 - Excellent
5-10 - Fair

- m													
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or inventing (8)													
2. A part of whole allot-													
ted to a person (7)													
3. Contest at law, legal	•	-					•	-					
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4 Free from social or	-	•		•		-	1	į					
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of these drugs; a remedial	13		•		i I	1	1				-		
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15. Going from one place	115	:	1		i			ļ	1				
to another (10)	1		- -	_ ~-	i	j	<u>i_</u>	<u> </u>			. <u> </u>		

Varsha Deepak



HERE are thousands of comets and asteroids in space. They pose a threat to mankind. For, they move according to set laws. They have a freedom of their own. They follow a trajectory, defined by the laws of motion of stellar objects. Keplar identified the laws of motion of planets. By and large, they remain valid, though finer sophistication has been applied with newer techniques.

The danger to earth because of this lies in the fact that scientists think that one or the other objects in space, hurtling at terrific speed, may choose the same time and position when the earth chooses to be there. Then shall come a collision. And BANG goes our planet, in a blaze of fire and ash, nuclear waste and dust, wiping out life on this planet, leaving the earth broken up in bits and pieces, each piece of the debris taking its own path according to the laws of motion.

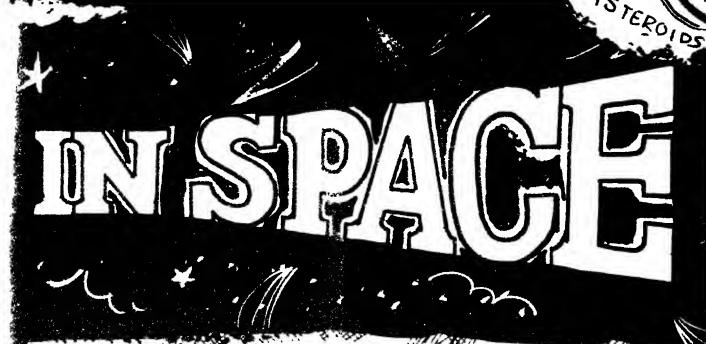
Now, attention has been focussed on two space bodies. Astronomers feel both of them pose a threat to our planet.

The first threat comes from comet Smith Tuttle.

This comet was first ob served in 1862. It has a diameter of about 5 km; it is a ball of ice and rock, which runs through space at a speed of about 60 kms per second. In September last year, astronomers once again took a fresh look at it. They assessed its path and got a shock. They noticed that the comet maintains a trajectory which shall lead to a collision with the earth. The collision is scheduled to take place on August 14, 2116. That is about 125 years off in the future. So, there is no need for immediate scare.

Can the astronomers





predict the event with A. Hiroshima that the first certainty?

Dr. Duncan Steel, who works at the Anglo-Australian Observatory, details the possibility of a collision. But, he adds, "We need to track it for five or six years to be sure. If it's going to hit, it will be on August 14, 2116, because that's where it's path intersects the earth's."

What would be the outcome?

Dr. Steel tells us, "It would create an impact force of 20 million megatonnes or about 1.6 million times the force of the bomb dropped on Hiroshima." (It was at

Hiroshima that the first atom bomb was dropped on August 6, 1945. That marked the end of World War II). He further states, "Hopefully, we personally are safe, but it appears that our greatgrandchildren are not safe."

For, according to Dr. Steel, "Anything larger than one km is the sort of thing that's on the threshold of wiping out mankind." The comet, which is now rushing on, eager to keep its date with our planet, is a five km wide ball of ice and rock. So, if the collision takes place, on August 14, 2116, it shall truly be doomsday.

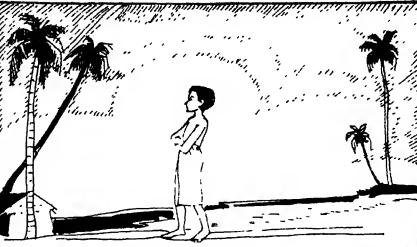
But, some scientists are confident of averting the tragedy. They say that when the comet comes closer, they shall send a spaceship, laden with a pack of nuclear explosives, explode the pack at the right time, after getting it implanted on the comet. The explosion shall be controlled. It will force the comet to change its trajectory ever so lightly. Yet, this slight deviation shall make the comet rush through space, at a distance of several thousand kms from the earth, on the predicted date in 2116. So, the earth shall not go up that day. Not if scientists have their way.





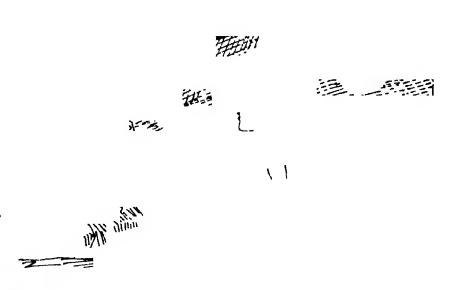


STORY : ALAKA SHANKAR



UNNI'S QUESTIONS REMAINED CHANSWERED. HE WALKED SLOWLY ALONG THE SHORE, DREAMING HIS WONDERFUL DREAMS.

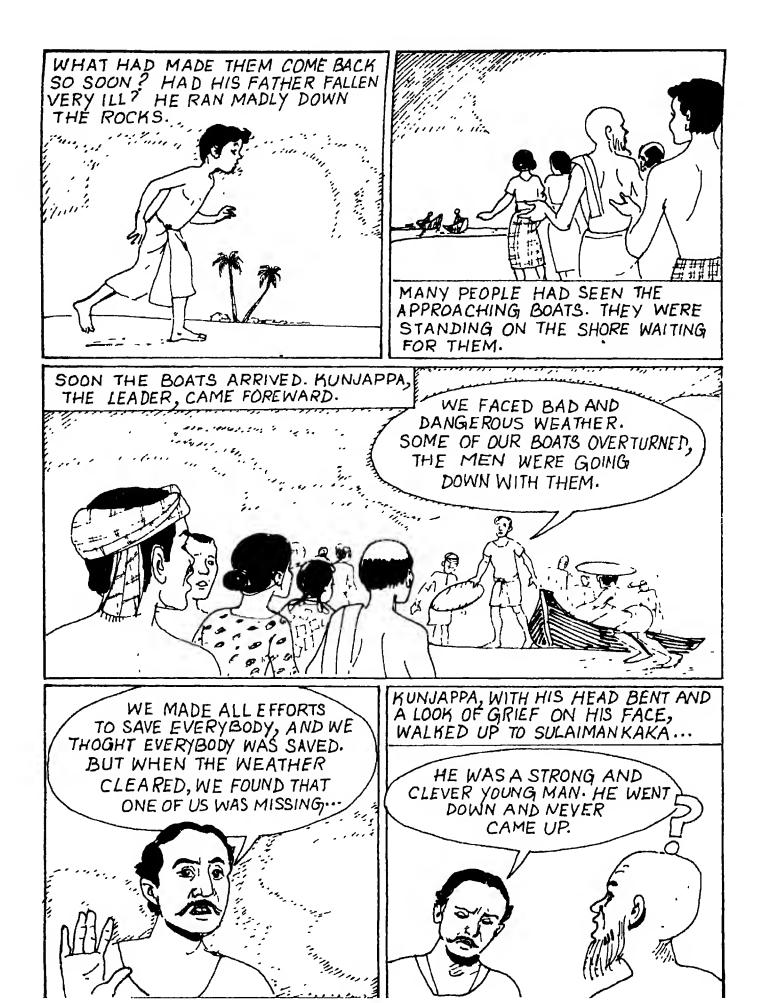
THESE WERE THE MOMENTS WHEN HE LIKED TO BE ALONE. WITH NOBODY TO DISTURB HIS THOUGHTS AND UNNI HAD FOUND THE MOST LOVELY PLACE TO SIT. HE STOOD DREAMILY NEAR THE ROCKS. THINKING BACK TO THE DAY THAT HE HAD FIRST SEEN THE RUINED FORTRESS. IT WAS ALMOST A YEAR AGO .. HE REMEMBERED





SUDDENLY, HE SAW A DARK PATCH FAR OUT IN THE OCEAN. HE REAL-ISED THAT IT WAS THE FLEET OF FISHING BOATS COMING BACK... HE WAS VERY SURPRISED. THE FISHERMEN HAD GONE ONLY IN THE MORNING AND THEY USUALLY RETURNED LATE IN THE EVENING.









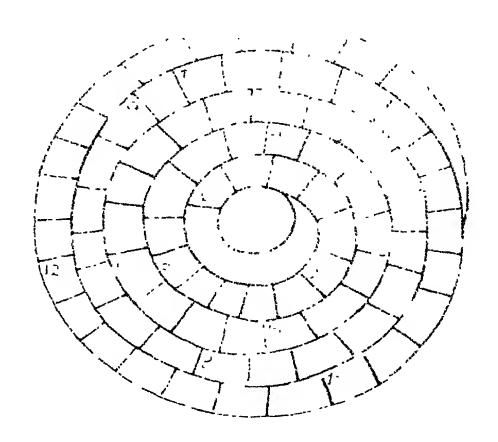
Spiral Maze

Arvinder

Solve the maze starting from No.1. The last and first letter of each successive answer is common. Answers are the Indian States and Union Territories.

- 1. The Golden Temple is in this State.
- 2. Tagore's home State.
- 3. Leh is the main city of this hilly district.
- 4. Historical city of Kuruskhetra lies in this State.

- 5. State famous for its tea.
- 6. Bombay is the capital of this State.
- 7. Island territory in the Indian Ocean.
- 8. North eastern State.
- 9. Union territory island in the Arabian Sea.
- 10. Indian State with largest population.
- 11. Hilly northern State.
- 12. Islands off the coast of Kerala.



OUR DAY OUT

A review of the play by T.S. Sudhir Photograph Courtesy Amar Talwar

T WAS Christmas eve and I was meandering along in Mandi House without a clue on how to spend the evening. Attempts at getting tickets of some play Willy Russell ponders over or the other going on at the various auditoriums met with little success. Our day out flashed the noticeboard of the Kamani auditorium and as a last resort, I decided to try my luck there too.

I was glad I did. For not only did I get to see

an excellent production staged by the Red Noses Club but also it was an evening well spent. My day out!

Our day out written by the state and fate of children who are hapless victims of the educational system, its failures, its 'no-hopers', its fodder for the factories and for the armies of the unqualified and the unemployed. In the process, it questions whether it is proper for an

educational system to favour only those who are adept at passing examinations.

A group of naughty students, who are actually taken to be the most dumb of the school's lot. are taken on a trip to a fort by a 'kind' teacher, Mrs. Shalini Kumar. While she is of the opinion that the least that can be provided to the students is one full day of pure fun and freedom, the other teacher, Mr Bose.doesn't



like it one bit. He is a strict disciplinarian who gives great importance to things like queueing up for everything and staying quiet. A clash of ideas takes place between the two teachers which coupled with the students' own experiences makes both the parties undergo changes. The unruly and disobedient ones like Kartik are put on the right track through friendly advice while the depressed ones like the girl who wishes to stay back at the beach are provided a ray of hope. Mr. Bose too turns more compassionate and understanding towards his wards.

The play directed by
Barry John was bilingual,
switching with ease from
English to Hindi and viceversa. It was the result of
six months of extensive
training which sought to
develop a child's personality through skills like
theatre and creative
writing. According to

Barry John, the Red
Noses Club founded in
August 1992 was formed
in the awareness that
many schools fail to develop the potential theatre skills of children or
allow them meaningful
creative expression. "The
club is just the platform
for all that", he adds.

The acting by the children especially that of the main actors deserves high praise. Mrs. Kumar (Diya Kapur) was perky and beautiful and indeed looked very much a teacher. Mr. Bose (Dhruv Menon) with a bad throat was quite effective though in a few scenes, he looked a bit too theatrical. The students were full of fun and reminded me of my school days. What fun it would be to be back in one's school, if our day out could be like this one!

"Mai hu bus ka boss, ye hai men bus" sang Gabbar Singh (Ambar Venkatraman), the bus driver. "What do birds eat?" Garam jalebi. What do animals eat? "Makke di roti". The lyrics by Manish P. Chaudhari and the music by Gussy Rikh were indeed the highlights of the play. The only jarring note was that the music took a little time to start and the actors just stood there gaping at each other and the audience which looked quite odd.

The sets were nothing much to write home about and the bus journey sadly enough, hardly seemed like one. Knowing how bad Indian roads are, one would expect any person attempting to walk through the bus to feel a lot of jerks but the performers just glided through it.

Nevertheless, a talented bunch of kids have been discovered. One only hopes that they go on to scale greater heights in future and provide theatre-lovers with many more such enjoyable days out.

PRAVIN AMRE

Ninth Indian to hit a century on debut Text: Navin Chand

E was waiting for his chance desperately. Ever since he gained recognition with a double century knock in the Irani Trophy 1990-91 and was subsequently picked up for the tour Down Under, he was kept waiting for a slot in the middle-order. And when the opportunity came in the Durban Test against South Africa, he grabbed it with both hands. He arrived at the crease at a time when India had lost four wickets for just 38 runs on the board and the danger of a batting collapse appeared

very much in the offing. But the determined and dedicated Pravin Amre not only lifted the team from a wretched start, in the company of skipper Mohammad Azharuddin, but also constructed the innings brick by brick in the company of Kiran More, to give India a psychological advantage of a first innings lead.

Only Amre and More exhibited the kind of determination needed for the infusion of life into an expiring innings. With his century knock, Pravin also joins the august body of eight other Indian

cricketers who have knocked up a century in their first Test (not necessarily first innings—See Box.)

Born on August 14, 1965. Pravin stood out even as a schoolboy cricketer. He was under the tutelage of Ramakant Achrekar, who has been the guiding light of players like Lalchand Raiput, C.K. Pandit. Sachin and others Big scores in the Cooch-Behar trophy tournament (under-19) saw Amre make the Indian side for the Youth World Cup and tour of New Zealand.

List of Indian Cricketers who have hit a Century on debut

Runs	Player's Name	Against	Venue	Season
38 & 118	Lala Amarnath	England	Bombay	1933-34
110	Dipak Shodhan	Pakistan	Calcutta	1952-53
100	A.G. Kripal Singh	New Zealand	Hyderabad	1955-56
26 & 112	Abbas Ali Baig	England	Manchester	1959
105 & 23	Hanumant Singh	England	Delhi	1963-64
0 & 137	G.R. Vishwanath	Australia	Kanpur	1969-70
124 & 9	Surender Amarnath	New Zealand	Auckland	1975-76
110	Mohd. Azharuddın	England	Calcutta	1984-85
103	Pravin Amre	South Africa	Durban	1992-93

Amre made his Ranji debut for Bombay against Karnataka in 1986-87 when the seniors were busy with the series in Pakistan.

When the seniors returned, Amre realised that it would be a waste of time and talent sitting in the Bombay reserves.

Hence on the advice of his coach, he switched to Railways from the 1987-88 season. After three

seasons with Railways,
Amre has opted to play for
Rajasthan from the 199091 season. The move
clicked as he got picked
up for the Australian tour.
Despite some good knocks
in the first-class matches,
he could not find a place in
the Test team and though
he played in four onedayers yet he could
hardly score runs because he would arrive at
the crease when only the

last few overs remained.

Amre is the only Indian batsman to have scored a double century in all the three national competitions—the Ranji trophy, Duleep trophy and the Irani Cup. The manner in which he is climbing up the cricketing ladder, one can look forward to a double century at Test level also.

Answers to 'Ions' of Intellect

(See page 31)

- 1. Creation
- 2. Portion
- 3. Litigation
- 4 Emancipation
- 5. Relation
- 6. Donation
- 7. Evolution
- 8. Gravitation
- 9. Rotation
- 10. Incision
- 11. Separation
- 12. Union
- 13. Prescription
- 14. Bastion
- 15. Locomotion

Answers to Spiral Maze

(See page 39)

- 1 Punjab
- 2. Bengal
- 3. Ladakh
- 4. Haryana
- 5. Assam
- 6. Maharashtra
- 7. Andaman
- 8 Nagaland
- 9. Diu
- 10. Uttar Pradesh
- 11. Himachal
- 12. Lakshadweep

TREASURE BOX

PART - VII

Story: Sarojini Sinha

Illustrations: R.Ashish Bagchi

The story so far...

It is April 1857 Govind is helping his vaidya father, Ayodhya Prasad, to make medicines. Govind is 14 years old and married. His younger sister Champa, is to leave shortly for her husband's house in Meerut. Govind's mother asks him to put up a swing for Champa on the neem tree. Doing so Govind recalls how as a child he would use the hollow in the tree to hide his goodies, so that it came to be called his 'treasure box'.

That night, a visitor, Chintamani, a sepoy in the British army brings news of Mangal Pandey. A fellow soldier, he had rebelled against the use of cartridges greased with cow or pig fat. Other soldiers followed suit. Pandey and his companions were hanged. An uprising was expected. Chintamani requests support. Ayodhya Prasad agrees.

Accompanying Champa to Mecrut, Govind befriends soldiers Shyam Singh and Abdul Fazal Khan. The uprising has spread to Mecrut. Caught in a crossfire between the citizens and the British, Govind is rescued by Abdul

Away in Aligarh, Ayodhya Piasad writes to Govind urging him to leave with the family for Bulandshahr where his uncle, Ganga Prasad, lives. However, the latter himself arrives. But Govind, too ill to be moved has to be left behind in the care of Bhola, his servant. He promises to join them later.

Upon recovering, Govind is reluctant to leave Delhi where all the action is. When Chintamani informs Govind of the progress of the uprising he is inspired and wants to join the army. His friend Abdul, takes him to his patron, Mirza Yunus Khan, who agrees to let Govind train with his soldiers.

Meanwhile, Mirza Sahib is a target of a deliberate attempt to create suspicion against the Emperor's supporters. To clear his name, Abdul and Govind offer to go to the firangi camp to meet Mirza's spy, Anant Ram, and get information of military significance that can be passed on. Abdul is taken prisoner. Therefore, Govind and Bhola meet Anant Ram. They rescue Abdul, too Anant Ram's news is then conveyed to the Emperor and acted upon but without success.

Now read on.

Solon after the seige train arrived, the British started clearing the jungle near the northern wall of the city. The sound of hatchets and knives could be heard as they hacked down the scrub and lemon trees between the Ridge and the Wall of Delhi.

The refreshing smell of newly cut lemon trees drifted down to the citizens, but brought them no cheer.

One evening, Govind and Abdul walked to Kashmiri Gate. The rainy season was over and the sky was clear, with a few stars twinkling overhead. They saw that the British had put up big lanterns to work at night.

Abdul said bitterly, "The firangis are working day and night to take Delhi and yet our leaders are doing nothing."

By the next evening, the British had a light battery in position on the Ridge to cover the labour parties engaged in putting up heavy seige batteries near the wall. They worked all night and, by morning, a heavy gun was in position.

In the next two days, the British erected a second battery near the Kashmir bastion and a third inside the ruined office of Custom House, which was only a hundred and fifty meters from the water bastion. They also put up a battery at Qudsia Bagh

The next morning, Govind woke up early. He was buttoning his jacket to go to Abdul's house when he heard a heavy rumble. The British batteries had opened fire on the Kashmir bastion.

"What's that noise" asked Bhola as he came running from the court-yard.

The boys hurried to Kashmiri Gate

The British were keeping up a ceaseless fire on the bastion and chunks of red masonry flew in the air. Panic-stricken people fled to safer places

Govind and Bhola took shelter behind the wall of a house and cheered as guns from the Delhi end fired in reply But their joy was shortlived because the guns were silenced within minutes.

"Let's go to Mirza sahib's house, Bhola," said Govind, "and find out if he knows of any plans for a counter-attack."

They Furried to Mirza Yunus Khan's house and

found Abdul there. The place was crowded with people, excitedly discussing the past week's events. But no one knew what plans, if any, their leaders had.

Above the babble of voices, they heard the town-crier calling people to collect wood and stones to repair the breaches in the wall. He also announced that able-bodied men would be drafted into the labour force.

Govind and Bhola waited to hear no more. They rushed to the Kashmir bastion, eager to help. They joined the gangs digging earth and helped carry it to the wall.

A young man, working beside Govind, wiped the sweat off his face and said, "The great Emperor Shah Jehan had these walls built and they stood fast for two hundred years. If such strong walls could be breached, how can the earth, stone and wood we are using to repair the breaches withstand the onslaught?"

Govind felt the same way, but kept quiet.

Though the guns of Delhi had been silenced, the sepoys were doing their best. They went out of the city and took up positions in trenches in front of the wall. Their muskets kept up such a steady fire that the British dared not approach the wall they had breached. The sepoys even advanced through the jungle and broken ground below the Ridge and swept the British batteries with continuous fire, thereby preventing them from

manning the guns.

Many a sepoy was killed, but they were undaunted. The British were in a quandary. They had to do something to crush the sepoys' morale.

The senior officers met to consider the next move. They emerged smiling. The plan was foolproof.

The third British bat-

tery opened fire on the water bastion and reduced it to a mass of rubble.

The dispirited sepoys withdrew into the city. That night the people of Delhi could hardly sleep, being prey to all sorts of worry and anxiety.

Govind and Bhola, who had been working the whole day, were too tired to return home. Besides, they would have to



continue repairing it. So they lay down to rest in the verandah of a house nearby.

The stars were shining bright. Flashing rockets and fire balls lit the night sky, while the roar of guns broke the eerie stillness. The boys were so fatigued that, inspite of the noise and flares, they fell into a deep sleep.

They woke up two hours later, conscious of the unnatural silence around them. The British guns had stopped firing. In the quiet of the night, they heard the scraping of boots and the sound of men stealthily sliding down the Ridge.

Some sepoys ran forward and saw two men.
They need but missed and the men rushed back to the Ridge, disappearing into the darkness.

The British guns started firing and Govind overheard the sepoys saying, "Those men were examining the breach in the wall. Now we can expect the firangis to attack."

The officers urged the men to resume repair of the breach. The sepoys as well as civilians like Govind and Bhola worked feverishly and the

gap was closed in record time. So the British opened fire again and the guns of Delhi roared in reply. Shells and rockets flashed past in fiery arcs.

Suddenly, their guns stopped firing. Cheering loudly, the British soldiers with rifles and ladders rushed to the wall.

"Here they come!" Govind shouted excitedly. "Fire on them, fire quickly."

His voice was drowned in the noise of firing as the sepoys opened up with their muskets. They clambered atop the eightmetre high wall and, grabbing loose stones, hurled them at the advancing British soldiers, yelling, cursing and daring them to enter the city.

Many were killed, but the British onslaught did not stop.

By now, it was daylight. The British General, John Nicholson, followed by some of his men, slid down the ditch surrounding the wall and ran up the opposite slope. More and more British soldiers followed his courageous example.

In the opposite camp, however, the Indian sepoys lost heart. With no one to direct them, they fled.

The victorious British poured into the city through the breach in the wall at the water bastion and the Mori bastion. They regrouped and took up position near Kashmiri Gate.

The fleeing sepoys reached the bridge of boats on the Yamuna. Alarmed by their flight, some troopers, including Abdul Aziz Khan, galloped to the bridge and chided the sepoys.

"Don't be cowards," yelled Abdul. "All is not lost. Come back like men and fight!"

The sepoys halted in their headlong flight and returned to the city. They occupied houses on both sides of Chandni Chowk ready to fight the British should they advance to the Lahore bastion.

General Nicholson was determined to take the lane connecting the Lahori and Kabuli Gate. It was very narrow, choked in places by projecting houses.

The sepoys had placed a gun in the middle and another at the end of the lane. Sharp-shooters swarmed the windows and sprawled on the flat roofs of low houses and on the parapets of the bastions.

Govind and Bhola stood on a low roof. They saw a tall Englishman, waving a sword, rushing into the lane at the head of his men. He was Nicholson himself.

much he disliked the foreign rulers, there was no denying the courage and gallantry of their officers.

Hardly had Nicholson entered the lane when a sharp-shooter's bullet

'How brave of him!' thought Govind. However

British had blown open Kashmiri Gate and a column had pushed into Chandni Chowk.

The sepoys put up a brave fight and pushed them back. They were forced to retreat to the church near Kashmiri Gate.

The fighting continued the whole day, but the sepoys could not drive the British out of Delhi

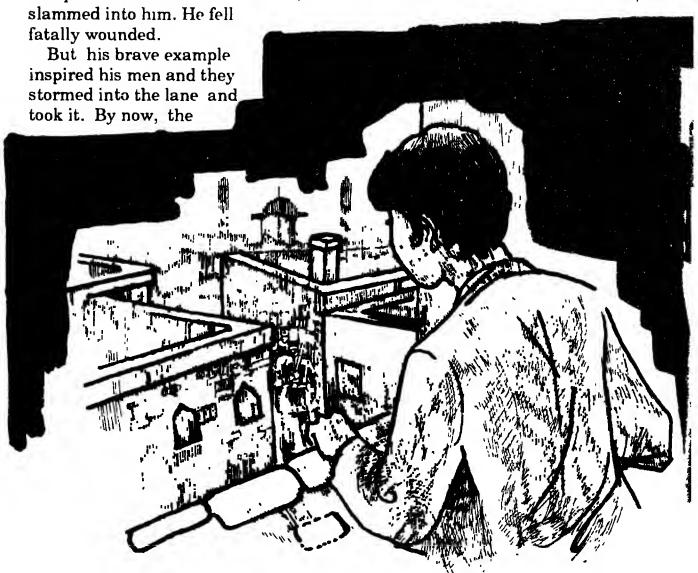
Bukht Khan was not a good soldier, but was a wily plotter. In a clever move, he ordered the

sepoys to fill the deserted shops with bottles of whisky, beer and wine.

That night many British soldiers drank themselves silly and lay drunk in the streets. The sepoys could easily have killed them, but they did not

The British commander learnt of what had happened. He had the remaining bottles destroyed. The deep open sewers of the city were soon flowing with liquor.

In the meantime.



people had already started fleeing the city. When Govind returned home, an anxious Bhola said, "We too should leave, Bhaiya."

Before Govind could reply, they heard the sound of wailing and rushed out. Some of their neighbours who had left Delhi the previous night were back home. They had a gruesome tale to tell of how soldiers had intercepted the fleeing people and opened fire on them. While many had perished, many had made their way back to seek shelter in their homes.

Govind was sorry for the children, women and old men who had suffered.

'What harm have they done to deserve this?' he asked himself again and again as he set about healing the wounded with his herbs and medicines. He and Bhola worked without respite to help these innocent victims.

As dusk fell, the two boys sat cross-legged on the terrace, both in deep thought.

"We shouldn't try to leave Delhi just now, Bhola," Govind broke the silence. "It's best we remain in hiding right here." Bhola nodded approval.

That evening, when they passed Salma-bee's house, they found her sitting outside, looking weak and helpless.

"Don't worry Salma-bee. We'll take care of you," said Govind. She nodded gratefully.

For the next day or two they remained at home, where they could hear the sound of gunfire as the British captured the magazine as well as houses leading to the Lahore bastion.

When Govind could wait no longer he went to Abdul's house to find out what the Emperor and his advisors proposed to do. He had to make several detours as some of the streets were occupied by soldiers. Govind's heart was heavy, for the British seemed to be in the city to stay.

He was astonished by what he saw in Abdul's house. The contents looked as though they had been spilled out. Abdul was not there and Arshad Khan looked older and more distraught than ever.

"What's all this Chachajaan?" asked Govind. "Where's Abdul?"

The old man's lips trembled as he muttered.

"I wonder whether we'll see him again, son. He went over to Mirza sahib's place, after making me promise that I'll leave Delhi."

"Leave Delhi!" Govind exclaimed. "But why? Surely the Angrez'll be thrown out...."

Arshad Khan interrupted him. "The fight is over, Beta. The firangis have surrounded the Lahori Gate and Jama Masjid areas and these are likely to fall any time now."

Govind sat down stunned. Even the old man had accepted defeat as inevitable.

"What does Mirza sahib say?" he asked.

"His family is leaving with us. But he himself and Abdul will stay with the Emperor and die with him if necessary."

"All right Chachajaan," said Govind getting to his feet, "I shall go and join them."

"Beta!" cried Arshad Khan, restraining him with a feeble hand. "Please listen to me. The firangis are looking for them. They've spies and informers everywhere. If you went in search of Abdul, they'd follow you and find him too."

"I shall be careful,

Chachajaan," Govind said earnestly.

"No, my son, please don't look for Abdul," Arshad Khan was pleading now. "In fact he himself told me to tell you to go to Bulundshahr. He strongly feels your place is with your mother. It's difficult for her to be without you as well as your father."

Govind was too dazed to say anything. He just stood there, head down and eyes staring vacantly.

Arshad Khan embraced him. "Goodbye, my son. Insha Allah, we'll all meet again in Delhi."

Govind returned home, his heart heavy with grief.

The days dragged on. Survival became more and more difficult for the boys, as for everybody else.

British soldiers were everywhere searching for loyalists.

Soon, one day, Govind was shocked to hear that the Emperor had fled the palace and sought shelter in Humayun's Tomb. The British had cornered him there and taken him prisoner.

Mirza Yunus Khan and Abdul, he was told, had died fighting near the palace when the British were about to blow open its gates. Their followers had fought to the last man.

With the arrest of the Emperor, the whole city was in turmoil like an ant-hill disturbed. The British were weeding out the freedom fighters and their supporters.

"Govind bhaiya," urged Bhola, "there's no point in our staying on. We had better leave the city. There're spies all over the place."

Govind agreed sadly. He threw away the gun Abdul had given him. It would be safer not to be caught with a weapon.

They called on Salmabee to persuade her to accompany them, but she flatly refused. "Let me be. I've lived here and I shall die here. I've no relatives to go to. Besides, my horse is too old to travel far."

After bidding her a tearful farewell, Govind and Bhola tied a few of their possessions in bundles and set out for Lahori Gate.

The whole city seemed to be converging there. The rush was so heavy. Soldiers, wielding guns with fixed bayonets, stood guarding the gates.

The fleeing people were mortally afraid of the soldiers. Some of them, foot-loose and trigger-happy, robbed men, women and children of

their valuables. They kicked and insulted the able-bodied men. Those who resisted were rounded up as rebels and tried by military courts. Many were sentenced to death.

"I think we should return home and hide," Govind whispered to Bhola.

"That would be safer, Bhaiya," Bhola agreed.

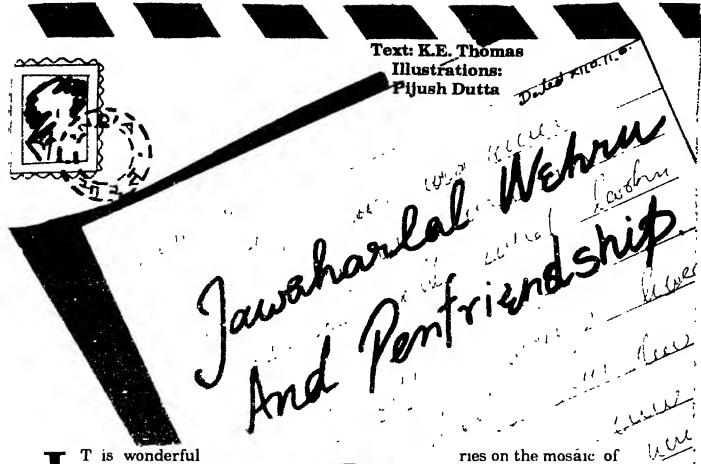
Both were well-built, sturdy boys and looked older than their fourteen years. The sentries on the look out for loyalists were sure to notice them.

"Our escapade at the Ridge camp must be an open secret by now," Govind explained. "Anant Ram would certainly not have given us away. But that scoundrel Kuber Chand' I'm sure he has given the Angrez our description."

Bhola nodded, looking fearfully all round him.

To be Continued





when friends are made through pen and ink. A piece of paper, a pen plus a willing heart are all that is required to sail on the placid waters of penfriendship. How to go about it? Someone decides to write to someone he had never known or seen. Here the pen becomes the magic wand. Two strangers start to correspond with each other and later exchange their life's stories and are strangers no more.

Letter writing is a gift. It transports the reader of the letter to another world. Usually, modesty, social inhibitions and shyness prevent most from speaking openly.

But they can easily reveal the innermost cravings to strangers in distant lands whom they have not seen or heard of before, even once. Seldom do such pals meet or talk. Even if they meet it is momentary—for a short period. They will have to resume their postal status soon as before to compose memo-

ries on the mosaic of friendship. A sense of elation and imagination takes over as one goes about finding creative channels to foster the friendship.

Few could equal Jawaharlal Nehru's uncanny knack of finding the right expression to describe an individual or situation at the right time. When India severed diplomatic relations with Portugal over the Goa issue and Pakistan was overseeing Portugal matters, Nehru described the relation between the two as that of 'Penfriends'. For many children Chacha Nehru was a good pen-friend too. A Japanese girl's joy soared when she got a letter

from Nehru with Indian postage stamps. A German boy on request got a packet of coins and picture postcards. He wrote back to Nehru telling him, "Uncle, I am overjoyed that you should at all have the thought and time to send me the gifts I wanted."

Once when India gifted an elephant to Japan in response to the request of Japanese children to Nehru, the press in the country hailed it as a Trunk Call from Tokyo' with a tinge of humour.

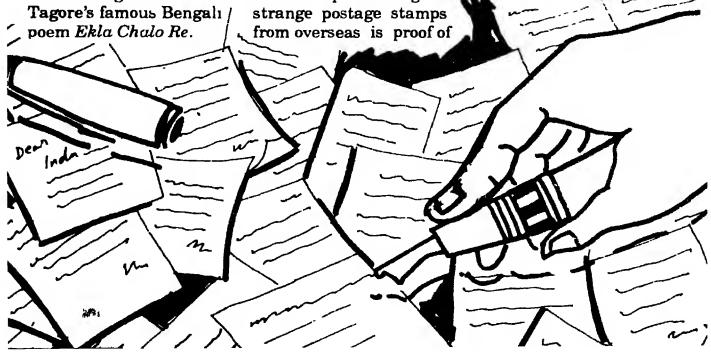
Mrs. Indira Gandhi's continued correspondence with the American author, Dorothy Norman spanning three decades was responsible for the book by the author 'Indira Gandhi: Letters to a Friend'. Mrs. Gandhi in response to a letter from a German girl sent an English version of Tagore's famous Bengali / poom Ehla Chalo Re

Mr. Rajiv Gandhi received a letter from a girl in Vancouver who advised him to be brave as his mother. Rajiv during 1986 played host to a Sri Lankan girl and her mother. For the 12-yearold Manique Cooray, of Sri Lanka it was a redletter week visiting places as the personal guest of the nation's premier, earning her the sobriquet from the Press — 'Premier Pen Pal'.

The domain of penfriendship is unlimited, Prime Ministers and Presidents not withstanding. It has become a world institution with a unique appeal for young and old. For the young, it gives opportunity to express views and cements a lively, exciting exercise. For the old it is a pastime to weave memories. The arrival of an envelope bearing strange postage stamps

its acceptance. Here the postage stamps become passports permitting entry—transcending all barriers as an Ambassador of good will and amity.

Pen-friendship is a charming way of fostering the feeling of neighbourliness and understanding between people of different countries who may never have the opportunity to travel and meet each other. Always cultivate a happy attitude and let it pervade through the letters exchanged. A cheerful letter can provide a spark of happiness to the receipient of the letter at the other end. Freshness, spontaniety and warmth are the ingredients of a lively letter. After all, the human heart is pretty much the same in any country of the world, white, black or brown.



PEN-FRIENDS CORNER

The Enrolment form for new members does not appear this month, as we have a long waiting list of members, whose names have yet to appear. Editor

5310
Piyasha Kanungo
(girl, 10)
C/o Mr. N.N. Kanungo
Sainik School, Goalpara
P.O. Rajapara
Assam 783133, India
Gardening, reading
India, Japan

5311
Sanjeev Arora (boy, 16)
Surinder General Store
Bank Road, Dasuya
Dt. Hoshiarpur, Punjab
India
Cricket, pop music
Any country

5312
Divya B. (g. 13)
'Padmasree'
H:No. 38/262, PKC Road
West Hill, Calicut
Kerala, India
Stamps, writing to penfriends
India, Japan

5313 Vivek Samdaria (b, 14) 39, Veerappan Street Sowcarpet Madras 600079 Tamil Nadu, India Stamps, reading Any country

5314
Bimla Bagdas (g, 15)
Std. 7, Mothithang High
School
Thimphu, Bhutan
Reading comics, stamps
Japan, U.S.A

5315
Gırısh D. Goggi (b, 13)
C/o D.N. Goggi
Aravınd Nagar, Hublı
Karnataka, India
Stamps. stickers
Other than India

5316
Jaishi (g, 14)
C-132 Sector 14
Chandigarh, India
Music, pen-friends
Mauritius, India

5317 Rahul Gupta (b, 12) B-25, Geetanjalı Enclave New Delhi 110017 Travelling, making friends India

5318 Sameeksha Belwal (g, 14) 51 Kaulagarh Canal Road (Dehra Dun)
POFRI, U.P., India
Reading, stamps
Switzerland, Holland

5319
Nazish Nishat (b, 16)
C/o Mr. M.D. Zeyauddin
Doordarshan
Masjid Road
Rajgangpur 770017
Dist. Sundargarh
Orissa, India
Reading, pen-friends
Any country

5320
Talpa Sawhney (g, 14)
223 Dayanand Vihar
Delhi 110092, India
Reading, painting
Any country

5321
Dohai Lum Awai Leng
(b, 14)
C/o Principal
V.K.V. Sunpura
Post Sunpura, Lohit Dist.
Arunachal Pradesh
792111
India
Playing football, collecting
photos
Any country

5322 Pratibha Prithviraj (g. 15) B-4/116, Paschim Vihar New Delhi 110063, India

Reading Any country

5323
Anirban Chakrabarti
(b, 7)
C/o Dr. S. Chakrabarti
IBR-28, I.I.T. Campus
Kharagpur 721302
West Bengal, India
Drawing, reading
Any country

5324
Reshma Ule (g, 14)
Takshasila
D/2 Anushakti Nagar
Bombay 400094
Chess, painting
India

Vikas Pasricha (b, 14) 6/885 Pasricha Timber Traders Main Bazaar, Mehrauli New Delhi 110030, India Cricket, music Any country

5326
Bernice Kielu (g, 16)
C/o Headmistress
Govt. High School, Peren
Nagaland 797101, India
Exchanging things,
talking
Mongolia, Europe

5327 Sheen George (b, 14) B-14/15 Mahananda Nagar COL Ujjain M.P. 456010, India Football, Western music U.S.A., Australia

5328
Richa Ratra (g, 13)
A-2, Mandakini Enclave
New Delhi 110019, India
Reading, collecting stamps
U.S.A., Australia

5329
Rohit Umachigi (b, 15)
D II/10 Jimmer Campus
Pondicherry 605006, India
Painting, collecting
stamps
Germany, Japan

5330
Padmaja G. Nair (g, 14)
201, Classic Co-op. Housing Society
Kalbad, Thane 400601
Maharashtra, India
Reading, music
Any country

5331
Bunty (b, 16)
B-IV 1123, Mohalla
Suddan
Ludhiana 141008
Punjab, India
Cricket, reading
Any country

5332
Jhansi S.P. Menezes (g, 9)
C/o Mr. J.B. Menezes
No. 384, First Floor
4th Cross, 9th Main Road
Vivekanagar
Bangalore 560047

Karnataka, India Collecting stamps, reading U.S.A., Canada

5333
Rajiv Kumar Singh (b, 16)
A-1591 Indira Nagar
Lucknow 226016, U.P.
India
Collecting stamps, music
Any country

5334
Suja K.M. (g. 15)
Jawahar Navodaya
Vidyalaya
Pachpahar P.O.
Jhalawar Dist.
Rajasthan 326502
Drawing, reading
India

5335
Akshar Pıllaı (b, 9)
C/o lt. Col. Ravı Pillaı
Commandant
63 Cavalry
C/o 56APO
Stamps, coins
U.S.A., Japan

5336 Shraddha Sharma (g, 14) G-9, Preet Vihar, Vikas Marg Delhi 110092, India Badminton, pen-friends India, U.S.A.

5337 Vineet Kumar (b, 8) Qr. No. H-24, T.R.L. Township Belpahar, Orissa 768218

CHILDREN'S WORLD FEBURARY 1993

India Collecting stamps, cricket Australia, U.S.A.

5338
Ashima Saikia (g, 11)
C/o Mr. J.C. Saikia
P.O. Bilat, Via Pasighat
Mirem Middle School
Arunachal Pradesh, India
Coin collection, reading
Japan, France

5339
Ishtiaq Javed (b, 12)
C/o Aboobacker
P.P. Box 96 Al-Khobar
31952
Saudi Arabia
Sports, reading
Any country

5340
Subarna Dutta (g, 16)
Qr. No. 58 D, Type III/III
O.F. Chanda
Maharashtra 442501
Movies, reading
Any country

5341
Jitender Kr. Kashyap
(b, 16)
5325-A, Shora Kothi
Paharganj
Delhi 11005, India
Swimming, painting
Any country

5342 Anita Sukan Baldota .g, 15) Rahul Apartment 102-B, 4th Floor Opposite Ambar Oscar S.V. Road, Andheri West Bombay 400058, India Music, reading France. U.S.A.

5343
Daniel Roy (b, 15)
C/o Civil Wireless Station
P.O. Gaylegphug
Bhutan
Reading, music
Switzerland, Germany

5344 Rupa V. Tari (g, 13) C/o Damodar B. Shet

Volvoi, P.O., Savoi Vere Ponda, Goa 403401, India Badminton, Nature Any country

5345
Leslie Robert James
(b, 11)
Mulamoothil House
No. 4142, Manessery P.O.
Ottapalam,

Kerala 679521 India Travelling, pen-friends Any country

5346
Nima Jhangmu (g, 16)
C/o D. Tsering
O/o The Suptdt. of Police
Bomdila
West Kameng
Arunachal Pradesh
790001
India
Reading, photography

5347
Rohit Kumar (b, 12)
YZ-2 Sarojini Nagar
New Delhi 110023, India
Studying, collecting
stamps
U.S.A., U.K.

5348
Pratiskha Bangera (g. 8)
190, Bazaar Gate Street
First Floor, Fort
Bombay 400001, India
Dancing, coin collecting
U.S.A., Brazil

5349
Sandeep Bajaj (b, 16)
A-137 Ashok Vihar
Phase II
Delhi 110052
Music, shopping
U.S.A., Japan

5350 K. Sugitha (g, 13) 25, Swasami Street, Salem

Tamil Nadu 636001, India Collecting stamps, reading Japan, Switzerland

5351 Vinay Singh (b. 14) Jawahar Navodyay Vidyalaya Kulamavu, Idukki 695601 Kerala, India Making friends, cricket

India, China

5352 M.S. Mamatha (g, 14) D/No. 19/7-05, 13th Cross Arekempanhalli, Wilson Garden Bangalore 560027, Karnataka, India Craft, reading Australia, U.S.A.

5353 Godwin J. Godinho (b, 12) C/o Lucy Gracias Near Urban Co. Op. Bank Chavdi Cana Cona Goa. India Football India, U.S.A.

5354 Barkha Kansara (g, 13) D-339, IFFCO Colony Udaynagar P.O. Gandhidham Gujarat 370201, India Reading, painting Japan, U.S.A.

5355 Bonny (b, 12) A-1/285 Pankha Road Janakpuri, New Delhi 110058 India Sports, making penfriends Any country

5356 Geetha G. Pai (g, 13) Sivananda, T.C 9/2575 Elankom Gardens Sasthamangalam Trivandrum 695010, Kerala India Music, letterwriting Any country

5357 Shikhil Suri (b, 11) I-74 Kirti Nagar New Delhi 110015 Collecting stamps, reading U.K., U.S.A. India 5358

Neetu Bhatnagar (g. 16) B-2/34-A Lawrence Road Delhi 110035, India Reading, music Any country

5359 Kaustubh Srikant Pawar (b. 15) Bldg. 26/Room No. 2070 M.H.B. Colony Gosai Road, Borivli (W) Bombay 400091, India Painting, reading U.S.A., Switzerland

Purvesha Dandawate (g, 15)B-4/116 Paschim Vihar New Delhi 110063, India Collecting stamps, making pen-friends India, U.K.

5360

5361 Santosh K. Roy (b, 15) Bldg. No. 26, Room No. 2060 M.H.B. Old Colony Gosai Road, Borivli Bombay 400091, India Painting, reading Russia, U.S.A.

5362 Ampili J. Prakash (g, 9) 15, Tılak Nagar Nalanchira P.O. Trivandrum, Kerala, India Painting, reading

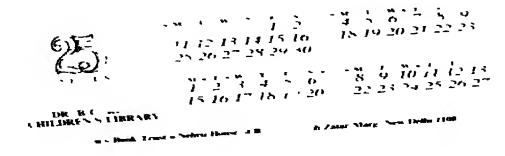
Hainganglung (b, 14) C/o Headmistress G.H.S. Peren Nagaland 797101, India Music, watching TV Any country

5363

5364 Pranita Baishya (g, 13) Sainik School, Goalpara P.O. Rajapara, Dist. Goalpara Assam 783133, India Badminton, singing Any country

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Founder-Editor SHANKAR Editor Vaijayanti Tonpe Asst. Editor Bhavana Nair

Design and Layout Subir Roy

Circulation & Advertisements A.J. Joseph

C.P. Ravindran

Area Representatives BOMBAY C.H Viswanath 502-A, Arun Chambers, 5th Floor, 317, Shahid Bhagat Singh Road, Opp.—Fort Market Bombay 400038 Telex 78050—ASCO IN

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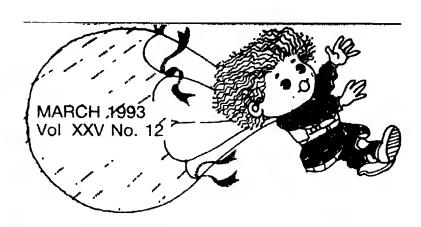
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A MEMORABLE DAY

Bhavana Nair
A report of the prize distribution function of the Shankai's International Children's Competition

AROUND THE WORLD GREECE

Ravi Laitu

THE MAGIC TREE

O P Bhagat A folk tale from Greece

AT CBT ON A PLEASANT WINTER AFTERNOON

G Prabhat A member of the Creative Writers' Club writes of his meeting with a Nehru Award winner in the Shankar's International Children's Competition

AT YOUR TOMB ON A PLEASANT SPRING DAY

Chen Yi Yi
The Nehru Award-winning story in the Shankai's International

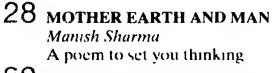
THE FRIENDLY ALIEN

Children's Competition

Vanjayanti Tonpe
The first Indian film made entirely
by children—read how they did it

THE DISOBEDIENT BOY

Kamala Rajan
Ranjit drives the scooter onto the road against his father's orders
Soon he learns a lesson



30 CRANES—THE BEAUTIFUL FEATHERED CREATURES

G Ratnakumar Meet these long-legged birds, some famous for their long migrations

33 THE LESSON

Niroj Ranjan Mishra
Arjun habitually stole money from his father's pockets. The honesty of the rickshaw pullet makes him examine his own actions.

A BIG CATCH

Alaka Shankar Comies serial continued

$\mathcal{Z} \in \mathbf{A} \ \mathbf{FATHERS} \ \mathbf{LOVE}$

Rashmi Mehta
Detshung thinks Abdullah has
mistaken him for his dead son but
does not disillusion him, only to
realise that Abdullah knew the truth
all along

45 The treasure box

Sarojuu Sinha The story draws towards it conclusion

52 PEN-FRIENDS CORNER

Photographs of SICC prize distribution on cover and inside C.M. Vinayagam





DEAR EDITOR...

DARKER SIDE

I am afraid we have been turning a blind eye to a darker side of our society Another year has elapsed, meanwhile, with its own ments and depents Puliticians and scientists are still hot over the achievements targeted and the ones we have in our hands. But they are forgetting one thing entirely. Even if we achieved 100% development it is in the hands of the children that the key to prosperity lies. Were they to be left without care, these achievements would be just another daydream. The number of deprived, ragpicking children is increasing every day. Their fathers and mothers, knowing that they could eke out a living from the labour of their own children, subject them to many cruelties. While their counterparts are merry-making these children are growing up the hard way in the streets.

Pradeep P G
Payyannur

REGULAR READER

I am a regular reader of this magazine and I find great pleasure in reading its stories, poems, and jokes

May this reagazine continue to be loved and read enthusiastically by all children

Shikha Swaroop, Shimla

POSTERS WANTED

I am a regular reader of Children's World I would like to see more posters in the magazine than there

have been of late. Posters of Walt Disney characters, popular sportstars should be there

I was disappointed to see that there was no calander for 1993 in January '93 issue. Is it possible to have one in a forthcoming issue.

Please ensure that we get a calendar of 1994 in the January '94 issue

> Abhıjıt Visaria Ahmedabad

PARALE

I am a new reader of Children's World Really it is the best magazine for all children and teenagers. But there are no quizzes and competitions. So I request you to start, some competitions. Either science quizzes or general knowledge quizzes.

Anurag

March is already here. And March more than any other month convinces you that the New Year is well and truly here to stay. Flowers bloom everywhere, giving everything a fresh and new look. Red silk cotion trees are ablaze with the flaming flower. Birds chirp all day long. Woolens are shed, and Hoh approaches with its promise of invitad colours and the first splash of cold water. The spine chills, not with that splash, but the thought of the annual exams coming stealthily.

March is already here. And close this way it is a relief these irch more than any other month—exams, bring a new class at the ivinces you that the New Year—end and that is welcome.

With somuch to keep track of, it is no wonder that Abhijit Visaria missed the calendar in the magazine But by nowall readers have probably received the commemorative calendar—that's the best part of missing something, somewhere—It comes to you, sometimes in a better form Competitions, quizzes, blow-ups, who knows what may unfold soon?

The 1992 Shankar's Interna-

11.

READERS ...

tional Children's competition yielded 912 prize-winning paintings and written entries. Prizes were awarded at a glorious ceremony in Rashtrapati. Bhavan Children and their events are sure going places. We bring you a whiff of what they are capable of doing, achieving, making and winning.

Happy reading and preparing for the exams

Letthis endearing smile last forever

Home. Family Career.

She manages them all.

All with that infectious smile.

Let's look beyond the smile.

May be there's a sigh hiding behind.

She could be your daughter.

She could be that child,

the fountainhead of all yov in your life.

Think of her tomorrows
Her dreams of tomorrow
You can brighten up those days with
UTl's Raj Lakshmi.

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Ray Lakshmı, an exclusive scheme for the girl child till 5 years' age; where her money can multiply up to 21 times in 20 years.

FEATURES

- ☐ An open-ended scheme
- ☐ Minimum investment of Rs 1000
- No upper limit
 Any individual state central po
- ☐ Any individual, state, central govt, trust, society, corporate body or company can invest for a grtl child up to 5 years of age
- Investment of Rs 1000 made at birth of child, multiplies 21 times in 20 years.
 Quantum of growth depends on age at entry
- ☐ Scheme matures when gr.l child completes 20 years of age
- ☐ Bonus declared periodically, payable on matunty



UNIT TRUST OF INDIA

Raj Lakshmi

At securities investments carry market nisk
Consult your investment advisor or again before investing.

A MEMORABLE DAY

A report of the Shankar's International Children's Competition prize distribution ceremony by Bhavana Nair

T is not often that we children hold centre stage, while grown-ups wait for us to tell them what to do. That is why my heart swells with pride, as I stand before all of you, on this lovely February morning, in the beautiful Mughal Gardens. We are honoured, Rashtrapatiji, that you have not just taken time off your busy schedule to give away the prizes to the winners of the 1992 Shankar's International Children's Competition but have even extended these beautiful surroundings to us said Arunima Shankar welcoming the gathering at the Mughal Gardens on February 12,1993

It was a memorable day for the children who had come to receive their prizes from the President of India Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, won in the Shankar's International Children's Competition for Painting, and Writing, 1992.

The function, as has been the custom, was conducted entirely by chil-

dren. After Arunima's welcome, it was the turn of Divisha Gupta, the President of the function, to speak, "We children," she said, "are often bewildered by the strange events that occur around us. Events, happenings, that are not of our makingwhich few adults have the time to explain, at least, convincingly, to us children. It is some comfort then for us to write about it, or express our feelings in our paintings For 44 years, we children of the world have reached out to each other through our paintings and writings. For 44 years through the world's worst and best of times. we children from diverse cultures, different countries, have collectively condemned war, hatred. terrorism, intolerance or divisions on the basis of colour, caste or creed. It is just a fraction of us painters, writers and prizewinners who have met. But we can vouch for the thoughts of 1,60,000 other children like us across the globe... And

proof of the fact that we children believe in peace and brotherhood of children is contained in the Shankar's Children's Art Number..."

The other children conducting the function were Vishesh Shrivastav who read the report, Lara Shankar who was responsible for the announcements and Sharani Rov who proposed the Vote of Thanks The five of them were chosen for the purpose, after a Declamation Contest Divisha was President by virtue of her winning a Jawaharlal Nehru Gold Medal for the best speaker in the contest

This year's President of India's Gold Medal for the best painting went to Park In Sook (11) of the Republic of Korea for his 'Mask Dance' (see cover 2). The Shankar's Award for the best written entry, was awarded to Rebecca Piechocki (10) of Australia for her story 'The Monkey Hero' In all, 22 Jawaharlal Nehru Gold Medals were presented, 19 for painting and three for



writing.

Of the 912 prizes awarded on February 12, over a 100 children received their prizes in person, the majority having come from outside Delhi, accompanied by their family and friends. Among these children were four Nehru Award winners—Anasuya Nandi and Girish Jayant Apte for painting and Kamini Karlekar and Vinky Maheshwari for writing.

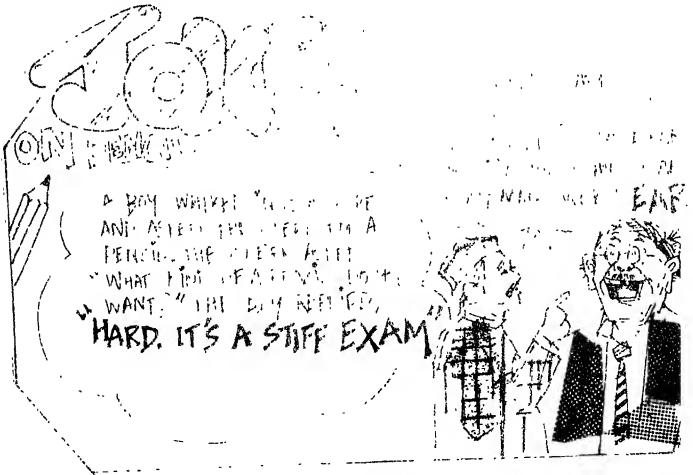
The awards of the children in other countries were received on their behalf by the Heads of Diplomatic Missions in

Delhi or their respresentatives.

Speaking on the occasion the President, Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma pointed out how no geographical barriers exist for children, how they do not need a North-South or East-West dialogue to bring them to a closer understanding of each other. He hoped that with the new lot of award-winners next year, the situation in various nations across the world would be better. The President also released the Shankar's Children's Art Number.

Volume 43, the annual compendium of the prize-winning paintings and literary entries of the Shankar's International Children's Competition.

At the end of the hourlong function the President hosted a tea for all the invitees, and was given a Kathakalı doll as a token of appreciation from SICC. (See cover III) On that warm note, each of us wound our way back, tucking away the memories of this day to mull over at a later date, at leisure.



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the ocean

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and the War Drum

541 - The Lord of Lanks 542 - Draupadi

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Monkey stories

544 - Subhas Chandra

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547 - Garuda

548 - Rabindranath

Tagore

549 - Tales of Shiva 550 - Sati & Shiva



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- A few titles have been brought out in 38 languages of the world?
- 436 titles have been printed so far?

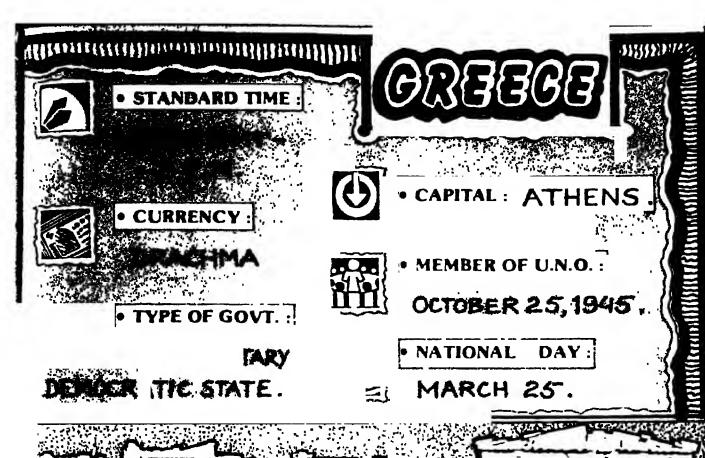




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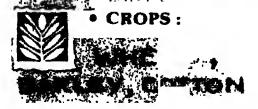
THE GREEK ALPHABE

LARISSA





PLACES OF INTEREST: THE PARTHENON ON THE ACROPOLIS, ATHENS . THE PALAESTRA AND THE TEMPLES OF HERA & ZEUS, OLYMPIA.

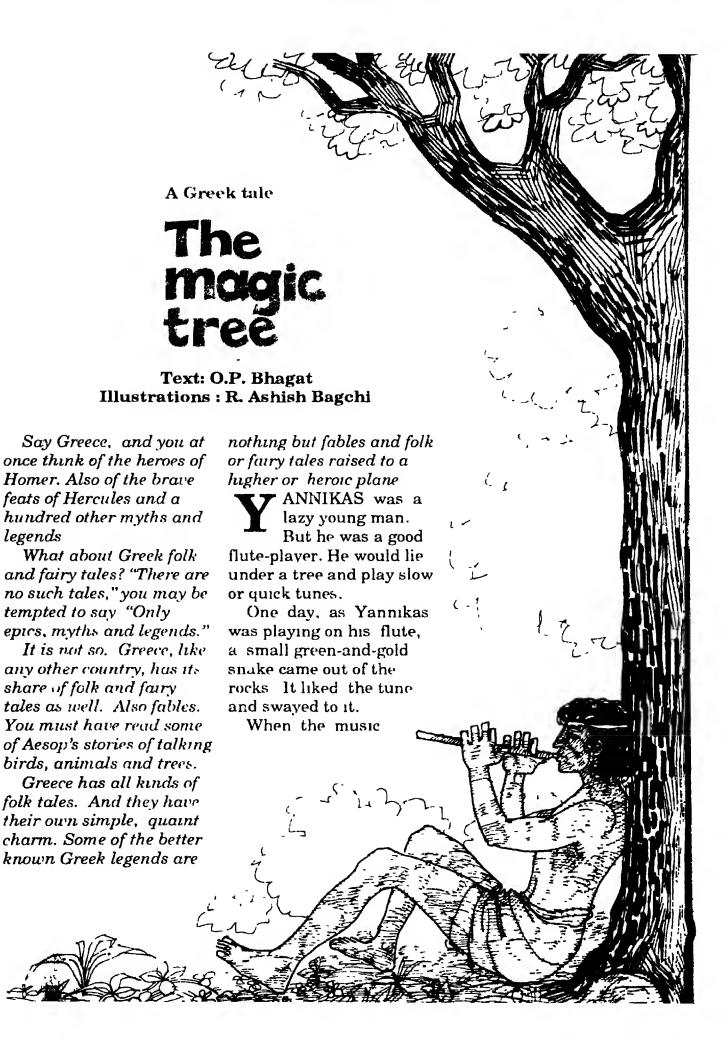




180

• NATURAL RESOURCES:

BAUXITE, GYPSUM, MAGNESITE, IRON ORE, COMPLEX SULPHIDES



ended, the snake gave Yannikas a piece of gold. The lazy man was overjoyed. He ran home and told his wife the good news.

Now every day, when he played his flute, the snake came there. It danced and, before going back, gave Yannıkas a piece of gold. The lazy man became a rich man.

Then one day the snake told Yannıkas that he was about to die. That meant no more gold. But there was another gift for the flute-player.

"Bury me in your garden," said the snake "A tree will grow there. If you play a fast and merry tune on your flute, it will bear oranges in no time.

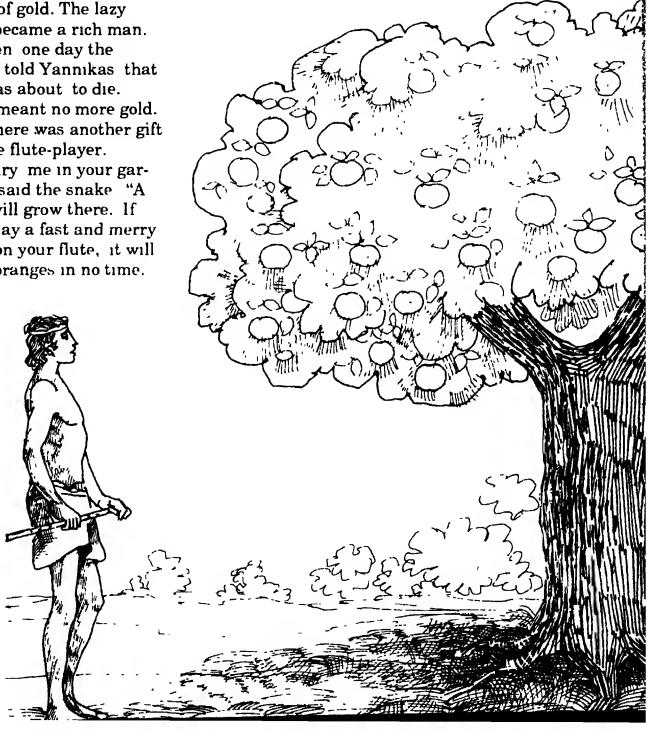
If the tune is slow and sad, you will get quinces."

Yannıkas dıd as told. Overnight a beautiful tree sprang up in his weedy garden. All his neighbours admired it.

It so happened that a sea captain came to the

village. On his way to the tavern, he passed by Yannikas's cottage. He saw the tree and stopped to look at the large, ripe oranges it was laden with. Never before had he seen an orange tree like it.

At the tavern he talked of the tree. Yannıkas was



there. He heard this. It just occurred to him that he could fool the captain and get some money out of him.

He told the captain that it was his tree, but it bore quinces, not oranges. The Captain said that he could tell an orange from a quince. He was sure that it was an orange tree.

The two made a bet. If it was an orange tree, Yannikas would give the captain a hundred pieces of gold. If the tree bore quinces, the captain would give Yannikas that much gold.

Yannikas asked the captain to come early in the morning. Then he went home and played a slow and sad tune on his flute. The tree was covered with quinces.

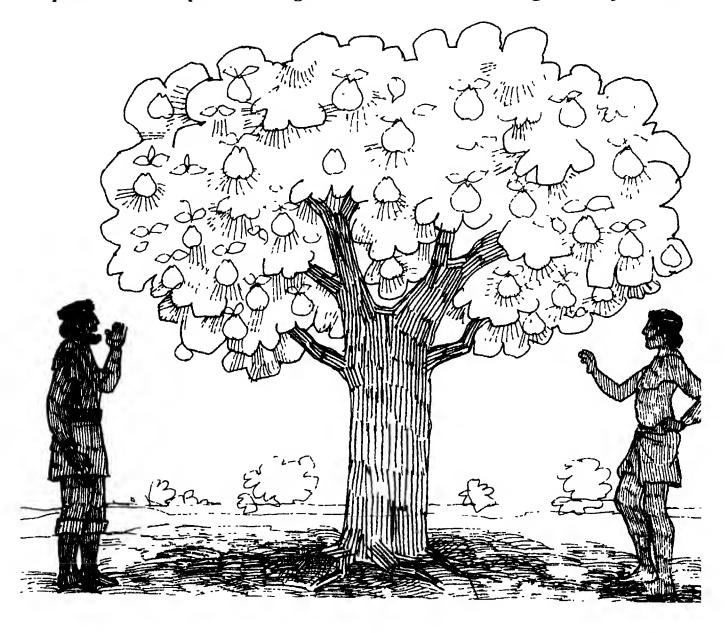
When the sea captain came in the morning, he could not believe his eyes. Where he had seen oranges now hung quinces. He gave Yannikas the

gold he had wagered.

After that another stranger passed L.. He was a glassware merchant. He stopped to look at the pretty pearshaped quinces. He envied the owner of the tree.

At the tavern he talked of the tree. Yannikas was there too. He heard this and saw another chance of making easy money.

He told the merchant that the tree belonged to him. But it was an orange, not a quince tree.



The merchant insisted that it was quinces he had seen. And again a bet was laid. The loser would part with a hundred pieces of gold.

Before the merchant came to his cottage, Yannikas played a quick and merry tune. Instead of quinces there were oranges on the tree. The merchant lost the bet.

But he was sure that he had somehow been tricked. He vowed to teach Yannikas a lesson.

While Yannikas was away, the merchant went to his wife with his lovely glassware. The woman was enchanted by the shapely and shining dishes and bottles. She wanted to buy everything.

"You need not pay for them," said the merchant. "Only tel! me the secret of your tree."

The good woman did not want to. But she had been so charmed by the gleaming glassware that she told the merchant about her husband's flute-playing and the effect it had on the tree.

The merchant took from her the flute as well, before he gave her all his glassware.

That night the mer-

chant and Yannikas met at the tavern again. The merchant talked of the tree. They made another bet. This time the loser would shell out not just a hundred pieces of gold but his entire fortune.

Yannikas got up early next morning to make it the winning fruit on the tree. But where was his flute? He found it nowhere. He asked his wife.

"I — I," stammered she, "I gave your flute to the merchant to get all this glassware."

Poor Yannikas. Without his flute he could do nothing. And he lost all his gold.

IF I WERE A KITTEN

If Locic a kitten, A kitten soft and furry, Mama cat woulcu't like me To grow up in a hurry

Out mistress would give me cream And I would lap it up! Then march down the room Hup' Hup! Hup! Hup!

Then would come father cat As proud as can be I would be his rightful heir But not as proud as he.

Samira Agnihotri (9)



$\mathcal{A}t$ \mathcal{CBT}

on a pleasant winter afternoon.

Text: G. Prabhat (16)

T was the afternoon of January 23, 1993, the fourth Saturday of the month. Members of the Creative Writers Club had as usual, assembled for their monthly meeting. The Creative Writers Club is a small society of about 30 children who meet once a month to discuss their favourite authors and books and to bring out the creative writing ability embedded deep in them. It was formed as a follow-up of the decision taken by the children to remain in contact when they had met in the mid-summer of '92 at a Creative Writing Workshop organised by Children's World.

That day, our Convener walked in with a bright, bespectacled oriental girl of about 16 years of age. The girl was no more than five feet, three inches tall and had a bag dangling from her

shoulder. She was Chen Yi Yi and she had come all the way from China to receive the gold medal for her story, sent to the Shankar's International Children's Competition, 1992.

Yi Yi sat down to an informal chat, during which she told us that she came from the small town of 'Qui-Zhou Quiyang' in South China. She had no brothers or sisters. She had submitted two stories, the first one on life in a big city of China and the other one (for which she won the medal) was about her classmate, a boy, who had died in an



accident. That boy was the son of a farmer and belonged to a rural area. All the children in the class used to mock this boy and view him with indifference. Then, when the school reopened after the vacations, their teacher informed them about the tragic death of that boy, as he fell from the roof top. All the students of the class decide to visit his tomb. The author realises their folly in ill treating Yusheng and how he had tried to be friendly and helpful. Yi Yi told us that, she had originally written her piece in Chinese and translated it in English herself.

Even though Yi Yi writes such sensitive stories, we found her to be no different from an average teenager with similar likes and dislikes. Likes that include MTV and especially Michael Jackson. She told us that

印度是一个美丽的国家 我非常 喜欢它,希望我们友谊长存.

India is a beautiful country

I like it very much I wish

our friendship will last for

ever

すけず

she and her classmates like to trouble their teachers and even criticise them just like we do in India. During the course of our chat, I came to know that she had been writing from the age of eight and that her parents keenly encourage her writing.

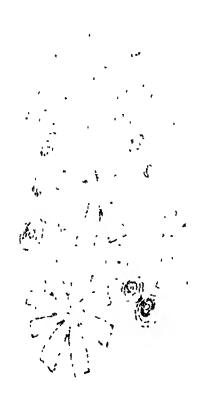
Yi Yi informed us that she liked to travel and would like to see America and France (Frenche', as she called it). On being questioned about India, she replied that India was a beautiful country and she especially liked the historical sights around Delhi. Yi Yi also told us

that she would definitely go to Agra to see the majestic Taj Mahal, during her stay in India. Moreover, Yi Yi appreciated Indian food and told us that she had eaten something rolled up, which deliberated upon, sounded like it was a dosa or parantha. She said she liked chikki very much.

Someone questioned her about the strange name 'Yı Yı' to which she replied that it meant an arrow which would always return to its quiver, wherever it was shot. Her parents had named her thus for they felt their daughter would always return home from wherever she went. Others asked her about the Great Wall of China which Yi Yı described as being fantastic and a great piece of architecture. (Of course, in her quaint English). She told us about the Chinese pictographic script and about the Chinese flag.

We were so enthusiastic that we almost grilled her to her wits end. Even though we would've preferred that the meeting could go on and on, it ended as all good things have to end, once tea was served. Addresses were exchanged with Yi Yi, with solemn promises to write letters.

It was the first occasion that the People's Republic of China had won a gold medal for writing in the Shankar's International Competition, but we are sure that China has many gifted young writers and once Yi Yi goes back, she will be instrumental in inspiring them to send many more prize-winning entries. It was lovely meeting Y1 Yi and we are sure she enjoyed her visit not only to all the historical sites in India, especially CBT and the Dolls Museum, but liked being with us so much at the Creative Writers Club. (she had a little gift for each one of us) that she will continue to stay in touch.



FORM IV

(See Rule 8)

Statement about ownership & other particulars about

CHILDREN'S WORLD

1. Place of publication: New Delhi

2. Periodicity of

- publication: Monthly

3. Printer's name, citi- Vaijayanti Tonpe zenship, and address: Indian

C/o Children's Book Trust

Nehru House New Delhi 110002

4. Publisher's name, Vaijayanti Tonpe

citizenship, and Indian

address: C/o Children's Book Trust

Nehru House New Delhi 110002

5. Editor's name, Vaijayanti Tonpe

citizenship, and Indian

address: C/o Children's Book Trust

Nehru House New Delhi 110002

6. Name and address CHILDREN'S BOOK

of owners: TRUST

Nehru House

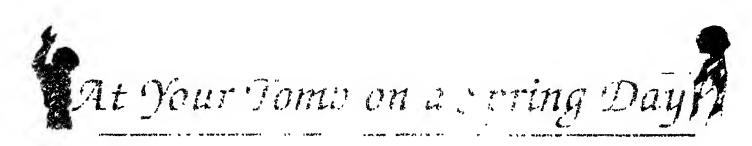
4 Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg

New Delhi 110002

I, Vaijayanti Tonpe, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

(Sd) Vaijayanti Tonpe Publisher

1.3.1993



Chen Yi Yi (15) China

This article won a Nehru Award (Gold Medal) in the 1992 Shankar's International Children's Competition and is reproduced here courtesy Shankar's Children's Art Number Volume 43.

S CHOOL has begun again. When I look at the empty seat you left beside mine, tears will run unrestrained down my cheeks. Oh, will you forgive me, Yusheng, my dear classmate?

We have been sharing the same desk in class for five years, yet I still feel uncertain about your personal characteristics. In my mind, you are just an unattractive classmate from the countryside, short and thin, your pants, often muddy and smelling of "ruralities." You are looked down upon by our classmates.

It was after a school gathering last term, when our class was awarded a certificate of merit and we all felt very happy. The teacher asked me to put

the certificate of merit on the wall above the blackboard. I tried to do it by myself standing on a desk but was not tall enough to make it. There were some boy students in the classroom at that moment, including you. I, as the monitor, asked the taller ones to give me a hand, but they all playfully refused. One of them said mischievously, "Let Chen Yusheng do it. Let Chen Yusheng do it." And so they pulled you out of your seat as if you were a bunch of old wet clothing. I knew that you were even shorter than me. But before I could say anything, you had already come to the desk, quietly put a chair on it and strenuously climbed up onto the chair. I held the chair with one hand, and offered you the certificate with the other Still, you were not tall enough to reach the wall even if you had stood on your toes. As you tried the second time, the chair suddenly tilted and you fell down hard on the ground.

By holding the desk

leg, you struggled to stand up. Then you rolled up your trouser legs and rubbed your knee for a while. With tears in your eyes, you limped along towards the school clinic.

Why didn't you cry? Why didn't you swear at us? Why? Why? If you had done that. I would have felt better today.

It was on another day, when two boys were chasing each other in the classroom and using the chairs to block each other as their shields. The chairs were therefore messed up. Nobody dared to stop them, but you did. Courageously you stood between them and shouted, "Don't do it. You are damaging the chairs."

You were backed up by no one, while the two naughty guys yelled at you, "Get away. Get away." You looked so thin against them, but you stubbornly stood still while patiently trying to persuade them, "Don't do it. Don't do it. You...are...damaging the...chairs." Since you restrained them the two of them started to push you

between them as if you were a volleyball. They didn't stop until the bell for the class rang.

The teacher walked into the classroom. Oh, my God. It was the music lesson, and I had forgotten to bring my textbook. Having known that the music teacher was extremely strict with us, I couldn't help breaking out in a cold sweat. I asked you politely in a rigid voice, "Can I borrow your music textbook?" With hesitation, you nodded and pushed the book onto the middle of our desk. As usual, the teacher examined the class. "Those of you who forget to bring the textbook please raise your hands." I didn't move, and bent down my head instead, hoping not to be noticed by the teacher Unfortunately, it caught the teacher's attention. She fixed her eves on the textbook, knocked on the desk with her hand, and then looked straight at you "What's the matter" she asked. My face was burning, but I tried to hide my nervousness and glanced at you through the corners of my eyes You knew what I saw I saw that you raised up your little right hand,

which was wrinkled with years of hard labour. Instantly, a mixed feeling of thankfulness and shamefulness welled up in my mind. Why did you do that? Did you want to guard the "dignity" of a monitor? Or you thought it was natural for you, a rural student, to be criticised? Or you just hoped to show the spirit of self-sacrifice? As expected, the teacher lost her temper and blamed you hard. I saw several tear drops splashed on the desk in front of you.

Now, whenever I recall it, I feel asbamed of myself. What is selfish? What is cowardly? I am selfish I am cowardly. You are but a mirror, in which I can see the reflection of my own soul, a soul which is so paltry and so lamentable.

Now, you have gone. You fell off the flat roof of your house while drying some fresh peppers in the sun. The curtains of your life have been opened only for a short time and closed in a hurry. Not until today have I realised that you should have occupied a space in the classroom of 60 square metres, like everyone else, and shared the joy belonging to us all. As far as human dignity is concerned, you and all the others should be equal. And not until now have I realised that it is we that deprived you of all the rights you should have had

Your small tomb lies in the bamboo groves behind the hill, close to your home but far from mine. On this warm day of spring. I come to see you Although our classmates have already decided on a date to come here together, I choose to be here alone ahead of them. This little blooming wild flower is for you Please accept

The first Indian video film made by children

Review by Vaijayanti Tonpe

Photograph courtesy: Dipanwita Donde

LL the world's a screen and all its children mere filmmakers." Oh, oh' That sounds like Shakespeare gone wrong. But really, even Shakespeare would not have written differently had he belonged to the almost 21st century instead of the 16th. Considering today's children have a few thousand feet of film exposed on them by the time they take their first steps it is not too surprising that they talk of cameras and flash bulbs, like they do of bubblegums and chocolates.

So, it was only a matter of time before one heard of a whole film being made entirely by children, of children, for everybody.

Meaning, this film not only had child actors but they were its directors, camera operators, set designers, light boys, story and dialogue writ-

ers. No, these children are not wonder kids from the film industry. This film was made as part of their school work but has nothing to do with academics, in the sense of Mathematics, Science, Hindi, Sanskrit, History or Geography. In fact the film is an adventure story set on earth and a planet in another galaxy Z-2. Yes, it is a science-fiction. with all the accompanying drama of a kidnapping, alien creatures and a rescue and return to earth. And all this, the work of children.

To be more precise, the students of Mirambika School, which is part of the Aurobindo Ashram in Delhi. Mirambika does not believe in the formal education system, like the majority of schools we know, believe in. There are no exams and a child here is free to pursue a course of study that is entirely in his/her range

of interests.

Since the desire to make a film and learn the technicalities was well within the range of these 10-11-year-olds interests, their school seems to have let them do just that. Helping them to understand the techniques were a young couple, Dipanwita Donde and her husband Nitin, who are the producers of 'The Friendly Alien' and part of the Angles Audio Visual Studio.

It is amazing what 'The Friendly Alien' packs in, in its brief 35 minutes. There are a group of children playing hide-

and-seek outside, while another group, their friends, are inside observing the stars. Asha, is the 'den' and one minute she is counting and the next minute she is walking as though being pulled by an unseen force. Her friends follow her and all of them are zapped into a spaceship and taken to Z-2. These alien kidnappers tell their son Pocorus that

they have brought back some playmates for him and now he need not be lonely But back on Earth, not hearing the sounds of their playmates outside, the star gazers set out to investigate. Seeing they are gone, they set out on the rescue trail. Pocorus, who eats and feeds others 'silver balls' as food, helps them escape

The journey into a



galaxy other than the Earth's Milky Way, involves discussion of black holes, the movement of heavenly bodies, the solar system and Z-2 which is a treeless planet! Amazed that children could portray all these on screen? Well. we were amazed too. What convincing cinematic effects these children had achieved with the skillful use of lights, music and sound effects and a lot of cellophne paper, all crinkled up. Especially the spaceship's take-off and landing and cruising in space, light and sound effects created a beautiful illusion out of a 'paper' spaceship.

That's right The video film also gives you a glimpse of how the children went about making this film. This is shown rather annoyingly right at the beginning—even before the actual film starts and one is rather disappointed with such an opening. This should rightfully have come after the exciting part. To be fair to the film makers however, it is quite a revelation for the audience to learn how the children went about their iobs.

Each scene was 'dı-

rected' by a different person. Sometimes a scene even had two directors, and it was amusing to watch them decide on camera placements and angles, calling out "Cut" and "Action" and sounding the clapper board before a "Take". There were scenes showing them painting sets, making up the alien planet Z-2 and even a scene showing Pocorus goofing up by using his own voice instead of his "alien" catlike purring. This introductory part also included observations by parents and teachers of Mirambika. And while teachers spoke of their students' determination and involvement, parents spoke of their children being full of joy and the jargon of film-making at home and talking in terms of "angles" and "scenes". One mother talked of how the film had helped develop concentration in her child. That was a refreshing observation. When in most homes 'film' is a fourletter word, on which too many children concentrate too much of the time-it is nice to know that making a film can teach a child concentration.

Whatever its technical

shortcomings or rough edges in story and plot, what emerges is a triumphant story of cooperation and teamwork and a determination to succeed on the part of the filmmakers. This film may well earn them a place in the Limca Book of Records as the first Indian film made entirely by children has they claimed on stage), on the evening of February 6, when 'The Friendly Alien' was premiered to a packed auditorium of adults and children spilling into the aisles and even waiting outside patiently for a second show to begin—but the children have a long way to go. Yet, it is precisely because 'The Friendly Alien' is so raw that one can safely put one's faith in the abilities of Abhishek Mulla. Ankur Pathak, Divva Passi, Diya Narain, Dhruy Saikia, Gauray Kumra, Hardık Satya. Janita Mary, Rajat Shekhar, Rajeshwari and Siba Bahri, the makers, actors and all-in-all of this film. They have all executed their parts without the overreach of the smarter-than-theiryears feeling that most children and their activities seem to convey these

days. A large slice of the accolades then, must go to the producers Nitin and Dipanwita Donde, It could not have been easy to entrust expensive equipment to the clumsy handling of children. But to do so willingly and with such ease that their own presence is conspicuous by its absence speaks well of their faith in the abilities of the children. Of late one has witnessed so many theatric: I and school activities that claim to be of the children and by the children where the unseen presence of adults is so overpowering and obvious, that by contrast 'The Friendly Alien' leaves behind a friendly breath of fresh air



R ANJIT stood beside his father watching him as he started the second-hand scooter. They had bought it only the previous day. It was Ranjit who had urged, pleaded and begged father to buy one. Like other fifteen-year-old-boys he too dearly wanted to possess a two-wheeler other than the cycle.

Watching his father attentively start and ride the scooter, Ranjit felt an overwhelming desire to ride it himself. So when his father parked the scooter after a short ride on the road outside the

Story: Kamala Rajan Illustrations: R.Ashish Bagchi

compound, Ranjit
snatched the vehicle
from his father, saying,
"Dad, let me ride it," and
sat on the scooter.

With a stern look on his face, father pocketed the scooter key. He chided

and warned Ranjit saying, "You will never do such a thing. And how did you dare think of riding it! What is your age? Fifteen years? You will have to wait for another year before you even think of riding a scooter." Then in



a gentler tone he added, seeing Ranjit look crestfallen, "Be patient my boy. For everything there is a time. A baby crawls, toddles and only afterwards learns to walk. subsequently to run. You are too young to be riding one. Now if I give you permission you'll be tempted to ride on the roads. Then anything could happen. A policeman could catch you and a fine will have to be paid. It would be humiliating. So stay put for one more year "

Before Ranjit could protest, father disappeared inside the house. Ranjit looked at the scooter sadly and lovingly. He thought father was being finicky. "Sometime I'll ride it and prove him wrong," he declared aloud. The glint of the devil was unmistakable in his eye.

It was an autumn evening in the little town of Ooty. The sun was smiling brilliantly from the sky before retiring for the day. Ranjit was in the compound seated on the scooter. There was the glint in his eye which belied his excitement. Running his hands on the cold metal, they came to rest on the handles of the scooter. He flexed the

brakes as well as the accelerator. His heart beat faster with a daring thought.

He could ride the scooter.

'And why not,' he thought as the germ of temptation began gathering nomentum, crystallising rapidly into a resolution. Ranut was tall and well-built for his age. Who could guess he was underage for riding a two wheeler? Cousins, his age in America were racing around on bikes. Why, he too could ride the scooter only for a short distance today. Father and Mother were visiting an Aunt. Yes, today was an excellent opportunity to use the scooter. It was a Sunday and traffic was light. He would ride only a little distance away and return. Father wouldn't know of it and Ranjit would revel in the secret knowledge that he knew how to ride it.

He briskly skipped into the house to get the key His father had chastised him and had been overtly cautious. Today he was going to prove him wrong. Snatching the key from the top of the TV, he shouted out, "Granny, I'll be back in a few minutes." Without waiting for an answer he was out, and starting the scooter.

Very few people were on the road, Ranjit kicked the starter, raising the accelerator at the same time The scooter came to life. Adrenalin pumped in his veins Just as suddenly doubts and uncertainty cropped up in his mind. They were dismissed as soon as he sat on the scooter Holding his breath he slowly released the brakes. The scooter moved forward. He used the brake and the scooter stopped.

He had control over the scooter. He was its master now. With a flush of triumph he smoothly rode to the end of the road. He found that he could turn the scooter too. Elated and euphoric he was tempted to ride beyond the road, take the turning and come back. With the wind blowing in his face, the intoxicating feeling of moving on wheels and the road stretching out before him, he felt a monarch right on top of the world. Father had underestimated him, he thought, as cypress trees fanned him from either side. A warm glow of victory pervaded his heart. He could take his friends on

a ride too. And he would be the only boy in his class to have driven a scooter. It would feel great to...

He did not notice the hairpin bend. Neither did he know he had to use the horn. Occupied with his thoughts, his eyes grew round with fear and terror. His body became rubbery. In those split

through his body, numbing every thought. Then everything blacked out. It was only after twenty-four hours he regained consciousness. He was alone in a hospital room. In trying to move his head a crippling pain paralysed him. He found that he couldn't move his right hand. It was swathed in bandages as

only he had heeded his father's good advice. If only he had been obedient, patient and not impulsive...

Presently when his father and mother saw him, tears were streaming down his cheeks. Remorse and repentance for what he had done reflected clearly on his twisted face. He looked at



seconds he would remember for the rest of his life, he wobbled like a drunkard into a grassy knoll, escaping the speeding lorry. Colliding against it he fell on his back with the scooter somersaulting over him. Pain from the back of his head shot

was his head.

The accident projected on the screen of his mind frame by frame. Shame and fear seized him. How was he going to face father? He had put him to great trouble and stress. He had been a very bad boy indeed. If father through the hazy mist of tears, willing him to give him a tonguelashing. He had asked for it by being such a disobedient boy.

Ranjit was surprised when father looked down at him kindly, gently wiping away the tears. Holding his hot hand in his, he squeezed it. In a soft voice he said, "I am happy that you are not seriously injured. I am happy that you learnt to ride the scooter. But my dear boy why were you so hasty? Why couldn't you wait for a few more months after which you will have no one to

prevent you from riding it for a lifetime? We learn the lessons of life from experiences—disastrous or otherwise. I hope you've learned yours. You will get well my boy and soon I'll be taking you home with you seated on the pillion. Sleep well."

After father closed the

door behind him, Ranjit felt a burden lift from his mind. Father was so generous to have forgiven him. He'd obey his wise words however bitter they were. And yes! the months would roll by and soon he'd be riding a scooter with the approval of his father and without fear of failure

LIFE MYSTERY TO SOUVE

Life is a mystery to solve, Life is a story untold, Life is an occan of joys and sorrows, Life is a garment to unfold

Life is full of happiness,

Where there are people with signs of

kindness and amiability

Life is full of sorrows,

Where there are people, guilty of the

deeds they have committed

Life is thorny, youth is vain,
Full of ups and downs,

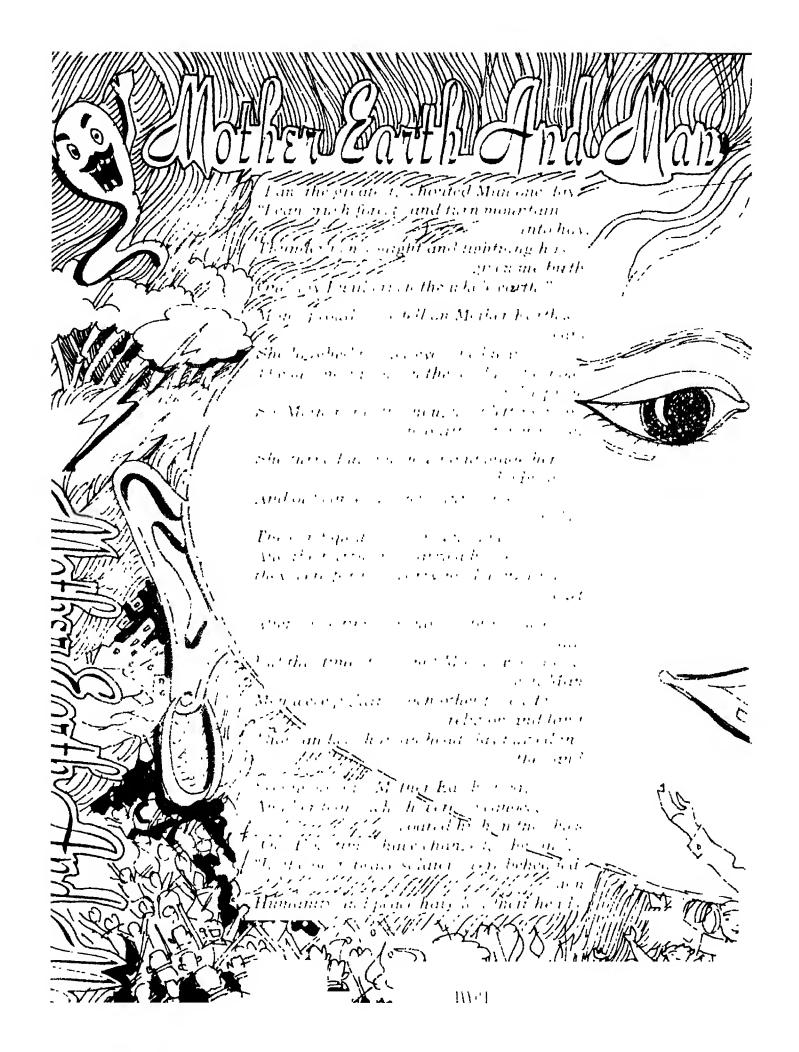
losses and gains.

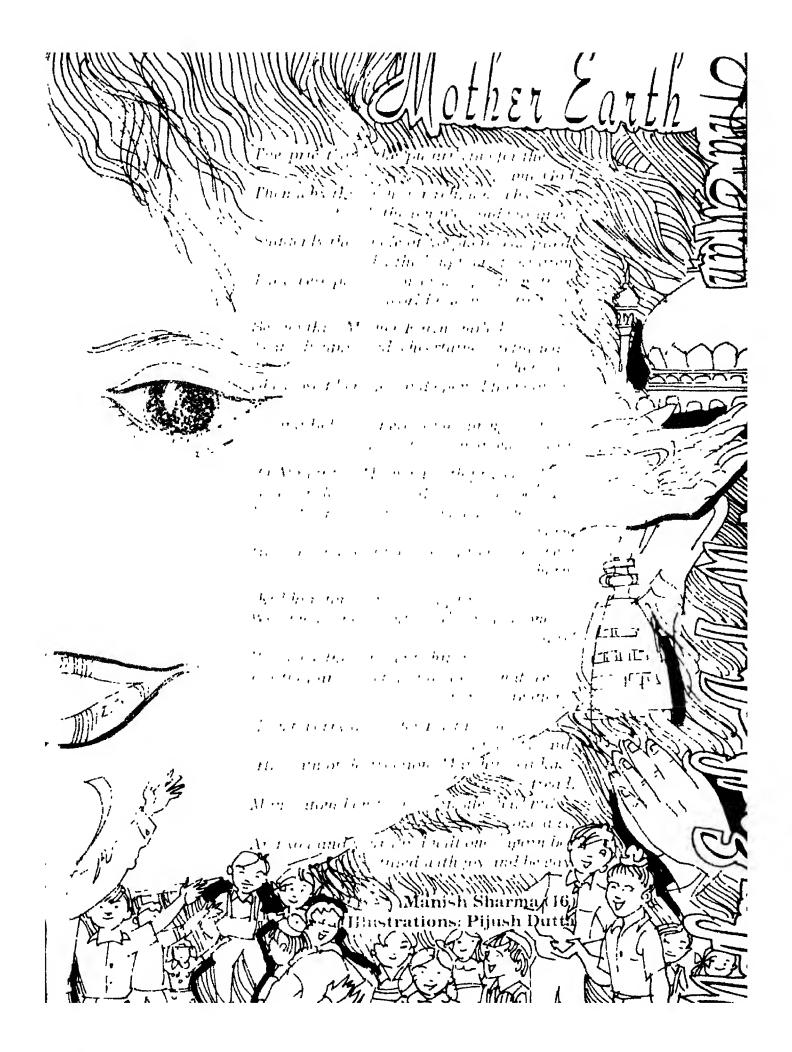
Life is the magic of the creator, It is the wonder of a fairy tale, It is the thinking of a philosopher, It is the effort of a holy saint. Life is cheerful
If we are happy
Life is satisfactory
If we are satisfied
Life is adventurous
If we are ready to face odds

But what is life? This, still remains a question, It is indeed, a problem to solve, and a story untold

The answer to this question is not yet known.
The answer to this question will never be known.

Shikha Swaroop (15)





GIBLIANS FEATHERED CREATURES

Text: G. Ratnakumar

Illustrations: B.G.Varma

RANES are very ancient birds having appeared on earth some 60 million years before man, and may have walked on the earth with Dinosaurs (extinct giant reptiles). They have changed little over the aeons.

Cranes generally reach a height of two to five feet with normal wing spread of seven to eight feet. The Whooping Crane of America stands up to five and a half feet tall while its wing spread reaches seven to eight feet. The Sarus Crane is very familiar to the peasant folk of India.

The snowy white Siberian Cranes are really the most attractive and fascinating feathered creatures of the bird world. The Siberian White Crane is snowy white with reddish pink legs and the naked skin of the face is red. The eyes, when seen at close quarters are pale, sparkling vellow. The Siberian White Cranes are shy birds and remain mostly in water from where they derive food. They eat

largely aquatic plant and vegetation and also fish and frogs. Inflight, these White Cranes are very graceful. The broad black tips of the wings are visible when in flight. And these birds fly in typical crane fashion with a full wing-beat; neck slightly sagged out in line with the body and the neck and legs stretched when flying.

Cranes are migratory by nature. Some species of Cranes migrate awesome distances even crossing the continents. During migration they move in large flocks in a "V" formation The Siberian White Cranes breed in the remote parts of northern Siberia, although the distribution of these magnificent birds is all the way from South Eastern Europe to Japan. These long distance migrants are visitors to India from Siberia after travelling hundreds of miles to the Ghana Bird Sanctuary in Bharatpur (Rajasthan, which is their special wintering ground) regularly in the autumn and remaining there till

the beginning of spring and returning to their summer breeding areas. The Common Crane which is an inhabitant of Northern Europe migrates to North Africa and Southern Asia. The White-Naped Crane nests in East Asia as far as Ussuri in Siberia and makes a long flight to China and Korea and spends the winter there

Cranes pair for life. It is believed that after pairing they never leave each other till death. The courtship dance of Cranes is a wonderful scene, being a feast for the eyes.

Cranes generally nest on the ground in the vegetation, and some species near water. The Siberian White Crane builds a nest which it makes by using dry twigs and reeds in the middle of vegetation near water. It lays a single clutch of two eggs. Cranes normally lay two eggs (sometimes 1 to 3) but on incubation only one egg hatches into a nestling. in case of the most rare and endangered Cranes. Both parents (male and



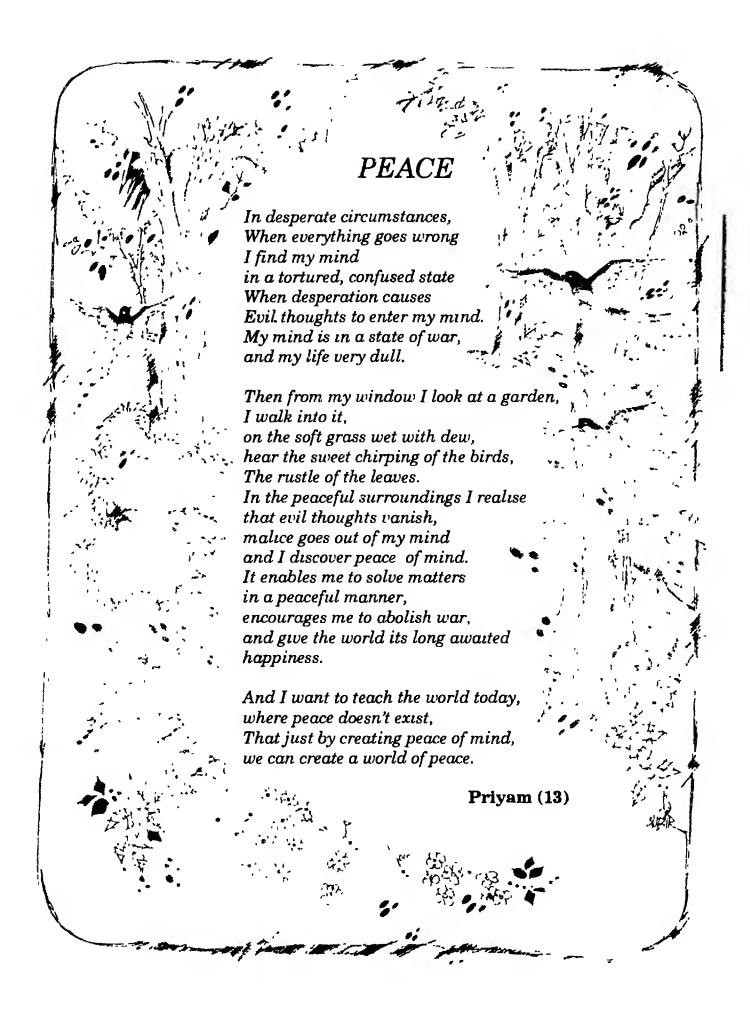
female cranes) take care of their young.

Some species of cranes such as Crowned Cranes roost in trees.

In the last two centuries Cranes have disappeared from much of their former habitats. As humanity has expanded its control over the planet the number of many species of Cranes has declined. some of them being on the verge of extinction. They are the Whooping Crane of North America, the Hooded Crane of Japan, the Wattled Crane of Africa, the Black-necked Crane of the Tibetan Plateau, the Siberian White Crane, the White-Naped Crane of East Asia and the Red-Crowned Crane. Of all these the Whooping Crane of America has become extremely rare in its natural habitat and is on the brink of extinction.

A more serious threat comes from destruction of the natural habitat of Cranes and the hunting of these splendid birds.

The "International Crane Foundation" (I.C.F.) in U.S.A. has been working extensively in raising the number of rare and endangered Cranes and in preserving the nesting or wintering habitats of rare Cranes.





Story : Niroj Ranjan Mishra Illustrations: Subir Roy

RJUN was on top of the world. Rich with a fifty-rupee note, neatly stolen from his father's pocket with the knack of an adept thief. Arun was thanking his stars, like a man who has just hit the jackpot. Earlier, petty pilferages of twenty-five or fifty paise for a chocolate or a candy used to suffice. but now he was fabulously. rich with a fifty-rupee note! A massive splurge on a sumptuous meal in nice hotel followed by a visit to the most plush cinema hall in the locality would mark the day for him!

Arjun was happily walking along the crowded bazaar road, crooning his favourite film tune.

"H1, Arjun!" called a voice from the crowd behind him.

His gambolling feet froze to a halt. It was his elder brother Mantu's voice! His lynx-eyed father must have detected the theft and engaged his 'darling' son, Mantu, to nab the absconding Arjun! Now, his detective brother was on his heel and any moment he would be

Now, his detective brother was on his heel and any moment he would be

trapped. Then he would be dragged home where his martinet father would pounce on him, scolding, thrashing and caning! Arjun shuddered, shutting out the sinister scenario at home. All the glee of his new found wealth was crushed by his fear and apprehensions.

"Listen, Arjun!" the voice, only a few inches away from him, rang like the ominous siren of a police van.

No, there was no escape. Suddenly Arjun dived into a marathon race, and ran for his life, But the voice chased him. Arjun saw an empty rickshaw coming towards him. In a last-ditch effort to save himself from Mantu, he climbed into the rickshaw tumbling on to its seat. He had to escape even if his skin got scratched or his bones broke!

"What happened, Sir?" the rickshaw boy asked, bemused at the strange acrobatics of the nervous Arjun.

"Shut up!" Arjun screamed. "Ride to M etro cinema immediately!"

The rickshaw boy shrugged pouting. He had earned sixty rupees that day. He should not spoil his jubilant mood by sympathising with his uncouth customer! His task was only to take the customer to his destination, and he would do just that!

The rickshaw boy pedalled his vehicle, humming an inaudible song. While this boy epitomised a carefree life, tension-ridden Arjun veered, whirled, shifted and jerked all over the rickshaw seat willing-hard to get beyond his brother's reach.

The rickshaw pulled in at the Metro cinema. Arjun sighed in relief. At last he was able to get away from that ominous voice. He fished the fifty-rupee note out of his shirt pocket and held it out to the rickshaw boy to pay his fare.

The boy looked at the note fluttering in Arjun's hand. Pooh, a fifty-rupee note was nothing for him today! He had earned enough to give his passengers the change. He untied the dirty towel around his waist. A pouch popped out from its folds. He pulled out a grip of notes, whistling happily. He gave forty-five rupees to Arjun and pushed the fifty-rupee note into the pouch.

Arjun stared at the

huge cut-out mounted atop the gate of the cinema hall. One cut-out showed the dancing heroine in gaudy garments while the other was of the macho hero swinging a punch menacingly at the ferociouslooking villain. "Must be a nice film! I must rush, otherwise the tickets will be sold out by the time I reach the counter!" Arjun muttered to himself elatedly.

Arjun emerged from the hall, relaxed. The suspense, thrill, fights and derring-do of the hero, vigorous dances of the heroine and the wild mannerisms of the swaggering villain of the film had exorcised him of Mantu's ghost!

"Hi, Arjun' A hand gripped his right shoulder. The dreaded voice blasted again behind him! Arjun froze with fright! He swallowed the title tune of the film he had been humming ecstatically. Shuddering, he turned his head. Yes, it was Mantu, smirking like a villain, basking in his exaggerated sadism!

"How long can you escape, my dear Arjun?" asked Mantu. "I will catch you wherever you hide!"

Arjun gaped at Mantu, CHILDREN'S WORLD MARCH 1993





feeling like a rat caught in a cat's grip.

"Arjun, I have seen you stealing. If you don't give me my share I will tell daddy everything,"Mantu threatened.

Mantu was blackmailing him! Arjun boiled, feeling like kicking and punching this villain of a brother like the hero in the film. But no, he could not afford to do anything rash otherwise he would land in greater danger at home! He had to silence the blackmailer by giving him his share!

"What are you thinking? Are you giving me my share or ...?" Mantu asked hoarsely.

"Wait I'll give you ..." Arjun said curtly. He shoved his hand into his shirt pocket and took out four rupees and fifty

paise. Then he searched the other pocket. It was empty. He panicked. He searched all the pockets of his pant, but drew a blank. Except two tworupee notes and a fifty paise coin from his shirt pocket he found nothing anywhere. He grew desperate.

"Don't act smart, Arjun!" Mantu thundered. "I am not going to be taken in by any of your tricks! I want my share. Give it within one hour, otherwise..." Mantu stormed out of sight.

Arjun slumped on the roadside. What should he do now? How could he fulfil his brother's demand? He remembered that the rickshaw boy had given him forty-five rupees in five-rupee notes. He had kept two notes

in his shirt pocket and the rest in the back pocket of his pant. He also remembered that he had only spent five rupees and fifty paise from the two notes for a ticket for the film show, and had kept the rest—four rupees and shirt fifty paise—in his pocket. Where had the remaining thirty-five from his back pocket gone?

 Suddenly the face of the rickshaw boy came to his mind. Yes, I must have dropped the money which he must have pocketed,' Arjun thought. The more he pondered over the matter the firmer his suspicion grew.

Arjun was startled out of his brooding by the ringing of a bell. He looked up and saw the same rickshaw boy in front of the cinema hall.

The thief had come! Arjun sprang to his feet He must rush to catch the boy otherwise he would take to his heels!

"You, thief!" Arjun almost pounced upon the boy, roaring like a wounded tiger. But he drew back in utter disbelief.

The rickshaw boy was holding some notes in his grip saying, "Sir, here is your money. You dropped it in my rickshaw. I did not notice it when you alighted from the rickshaw. I saw it when I reached home. So I returned, covering about ten kilometres to give back your money."

Arjun was dazed, alternately looking at the boy's face and at the notes in his hand. Could there be

such an honest person in this world? Arjun stared at the boy, bewildered.

"Sir," the boy said gravely. "I may be poor, but I earn my livelihood by hard labour, not by stealing."

Arjun was transfixed. The boys words had a sting, stabbing his whole being. 'A poor rickshaw boy can eke out an honest living by hard labour, while I steal for the luxury of a chocolate or a cinema ticket!' Arjun's eyes glistened with unshed tears. Repentance was lac-

erating his little heart. The boy had left, but his face, radiating with the glow of honesty and integrity, flashed again and again on Arjun's mental horizon.

Suddenly his face turned taut, his eyes shone with a new glint and a sense of determination invigorated him. "I am a thief! So I must accept the punishment by my father however severe it might prove! But I will never surrender to Mantu! I will never give him his share!" he decided.

SWEET SORROW

The wheel of life continues:
We come — and we go.
We meet — and we part.
Life's cycle goes on...

Parting is part of life And parting is a must— For progress —and so Also for evolution...

For earnest those, who lead A simple, purposeful life Parting, ever and ever sorrow.

Sheona Suna

CRICKET AND LIFE

When life is a game of Cricket,
The world is the stadium.
And land is the pitch
Some people are batsmen,
While others fielders.
The team of the rich always wins
The number of days are the runs taken
And there is no other audience expect one,
That is, the Lord, our god!

P. Krishnan

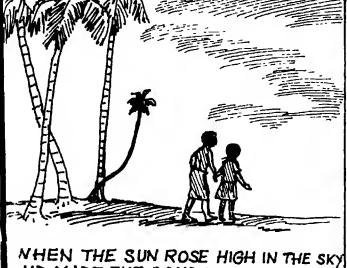


STORY : ALAKA SHANKAR ILLUS : B.G. VARMA

IN THE MORNING, THE BEACH WAS FRESH AND BEAUTIFUL. UNNI AND GEETU HELD HANDS AND RAN ALONG THE PALM TREES







AND MADE THE SAND HOT, UNNI TOOK

GEETU BACK HOME.





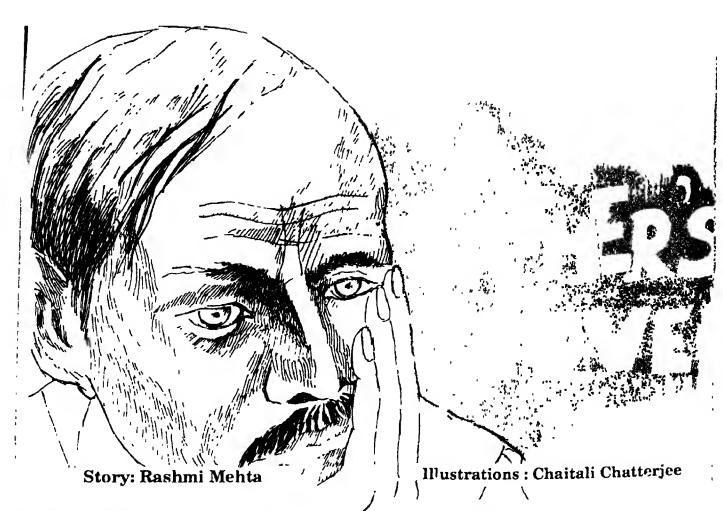


HE STOOD THERE PANTING. SUDDENLY HE SAW A FIGURE CROUCHED A LITTLE AWAY FROM THE FORTRESS.









RRE' How many times have I told you not to come here!" the peon at the District Collector's office in Dhubri said, annoyed on spotting the old man, Abdullah, again.

"Saheb! Please give this arzee to Collector Babu," Abdullah pleaded himbly, holding on with slaking hands to a tattered, dog-eared paper. "My poor son Ismail must be released from jail. He is innocent, absolutely innocent".

"Humh! Mad man," the peon muttered without any malice. He seated himself importantly on the rickety cane chair and began, "Abdullah, go and get your ears cleaned. And even your brains if you have any Haven't I told you a thousand times that the D.C. Saheb will not see you. My mouth has gone dry repeating this over and over again. No use! Hum..!" he finished

"Please don't say that I am sure that if you are kind enough to give him this arzee, he will see me." Seeing that his pleading was falling on deaf ears, he said as he touched the peon's feet, "See I am an old man, please be kind. May all happiness linger on your

doorstep"\

The peon looked on amusedly. Then explained as kindly as he could, "See old man Your son is no more. He died in prison three years ago of pneumonia. No arzee of yours will bring him back. Oof! What's the use of telling you!" he grumbled in unconcerned exasperation.

Abdullah looked on as if in a trance. He sat clutching his knees in silence and holding on to the arzee for dear life. Nobody in the hustling-bustling office disturbed him, nor did anyone spare him a second glance.

Much later, when evening came and the office was to be closed, the peon shook Abdullah kindly and said, "Go home!"

"Home" asked the old man still in a daze "Yes I must go home My wife is waiting for me."

The peon thought it fit not to remind him that his wife was no more. Let the man live in his imaginary world. What other world could he live in anyway!

Abdullah had been a refugee from Bangladesh and had come to India before the 1971 war With him were his wife and sixteen-year-old son Soon after arrival he had got a job at a construction site Ismail, his son, who was good at wood carving, used to make small wooden statues. He would then sell them at the local haat (village bazaar) for a pittance All around life throbbed with hectic activity but they remained imprisoned in this life of poverty, beyond the pale of life so to say

One day when Ismail had gone to the market to sell his wares, he heard a hue and—cry being raised a short distance away.

"Pick pocket! My wallet!" a man was screaming

at the top of his voice. He was running after a young boy who was heading in Ismail's direction. In the confusion that followed, Ismail had got caught along with three other boys Nobody was clear who had actually stolen the wallet Despite this all four were taken into police custody from where they were then shifted to the juvenile delinquent cell. It was here that Ismail had caught a chill which ultimately led to pneumonia Abdullah had spent days and nights at the police station and at the District Collector's office trying to proclaim bis son's innocence On somebody's advice he had got an application written from a tout, one of many who sit outside courts, and at an exorbitant price write out arzees or applications by the dozen. But it had all been to no avail because even before Ismail could be released be died in fail

Abdullah's life had been totally shattered Another blow came a few months later when his wife too passed away Abdullah's life was never the same again. Once he had been the principal bread-earner of the family, he was now unable

to work and even earn enough to feed himself. His health deteriorated and so did his mental state. Some of his old acquaintances gave him food whenever he came to their doorstep. He now seemed to move from day to day in the hope of seeing his son Ismail.

Three years passed
One morning some young men came to work at a nearby construction site. They were Bodos from the neighbouring village who were daily wagers and who moved from site to site in search of work. In this group was a young Bodo — about twenty-five years of age, with curly had and gay laughter. He was Detshung

That night Detshung and his group settled down for the night under a patch of cucalyptus trees. After they had eaten their food they sat round a fire. And in the silence of the night, a rich masculine voice broke out into a soft melodious song And accompanying this song were the hauntingly melodious notes of a flute The sound rose and fell as! if the waves of the ocean were rocking back and forth in a soft lullaby

Abdullah, listened to

the flute awhile and as if mesmerised, he followed the sound. That led him to this group of young men so full of life. Ismail used to play the flute so well. Standing in the boundary of the enveloping darkness

which circled the fire-lit area, Abdullah stared at the man who was playing the flute and his face lit up in a smile.

"Ah, my heart! My Ismail! I knew it, my son! that they would free you They had to send you hack to me," Abdullah hurried to Detshungs side and hugged him with his frail body "My son-Oh so much happiness! You have come back to me," he said with tears in

Detshung was amazed. Who was this old man who called him his son? He wanted an answer but when he looked into the old man's eyes he saw so much of love there that he held back his question. He would know in due time. But for now Detshung could see that this old man's eyes were brimming with happiness, as if a new life had entered him



Detshung stayed with Abdullah and looked after all his needs. He did not mind being called Ismail because by now he had found out this old man's tragedy. Abdullah never went to the D.C.'s office again and once when he met the peon at the local market, he hailed him aloud and said. "My son has come back to me. You were wrong in telling me that he was dead." The peon only smiled sadly and said nothing.

Many months later Abdullah fell seriously ill.
Despite medication there was no improvement. One day Abdullah called
Detshung to his side and told him, "My son. I do

not think that I have long to live. And I do not mind leaving this world now for I am at peace. I have nothing to give you in return for the happiness you have given me. Take this gold chain and use it when you need it. My father had given it to me." Saying this he took off a chain from his neck and handed it over to Detshung.

"But Abba, as your son I have done what was my duty," replied Detshung holding Abdullah's shrivelled hand.

"Detshung!" Abdullah said stroking Detshung's face, "you have given this poor old man the love of a son. I needed you."

There was a smile on his face and he said no more.

Detshung was dumbstruck. He had indeed thought that Abdullah had always mistaken him for his dead son Ismail. But it had not been so.

Many, many years later when Detshung needed money for his only daughter's marriage, it was this gold chain which he sold. He collected enough money to buy her the basic amenities she would need in her new home. As he blessed her, there was a lump in his throat for there was a deep sense of gratitude in his heart for a father's love.





PART VIII

The story so far...

It is April 1857. Govind is helping his vaidya father, Ayodhya Prasad, to make medicines. Govind is 14 years old and married. His younger sister, Champa, is to leave shortly for her husband's house in Meerut. Govind's mother asks him to put up a swing for Champa on the neem tree. Doing so, Govind recalls how as a child he would use the hollow in the tree to hide his goodies, so that it came to be called his 'treasure box'.

That night, a visitor, Chintamani, a sepoy in the British army, brings news of Mangal Pandey. A fellow soldier, he had rebelled against the use of cartridges greased with cow or pig fat. Other soldiers followed suit. Pandey and his companions were hanged. An uprising was expected. Chintamani requests support. Ayodhya Prasad agrees.

Accompanying Champa to Meerut, Govind befriends soldiers Shyam Singh and Abdul Fazal Khan. The uprising has spread to Meerut.

Away in Aligarh, Ayodhya Prasad writes to Govind urging him to leave with the family for Bulandshahr where his uncle, Ganga Prasad, lives. However, the latter himself arrives. But Govind, too ill to be moved, has to be left behind in the care of Bhola, his servant. He promises to join them later.

Upon recovering, Govind is reluctant to leave Delhi where all the action is. When Chintamani informs Govind of the progress of the uprising he is inspired to join the army. His friend, Abdul, takes him to his patron, Mirza Yunus Khan, who agrees to let Govind train with his soldiers.

Meanwhile, Mirza Sahib is being defamed. To clear his name, Abdul and Govind offer to go to the firangi camp to meet Mirza's spy, Anant Ram, and get information of military significance that can be passed on. Abdul is taken prisoner. So, Govind and Bhola meet Anant Ram. They rescue Abdul, too. Anant Ram's news is then conveyed to the Emperor and acted upon but without success.

The British take Delhi and people start fleeing the city. Govind and Bhola too prepare to leave but change their minds at the last moment.

Now read on.

Back home they were astonished to find Jagannath waiting outside.

"What're you doing here? Where have you come from?" Govind demanded.

Jagannath was hungry, tired and frightened. He started dithering. "I....I....walked down from.....fromBulundshahr."

"Everybody's leaving Delhi and like a fool, you have returned," Govind snapped. "Had we left, what would have happened to you, you fool?"

Jagannath burst out crying. So Bhola said kindly, "Take it easy. I shall get you something to eat."

After eating, Jagannath felt better. He told them he had left Bulundshahr because he wanted to be in Delhi to fight the foreigners So he had left a note for his mother, slipped out of the house and joined a group of sepoys who were coming to Delhi. They reached Delhi just as the British assault started. The sepoys waited outside Delhi and, when they learnt of the British victory, dispersed as fast as they could.

Jagannath however, entered the city. No one

challenged the ill-fed, poorly dressed boy. He was shocked to see the city's plight, with houses destroyed and the dead and wounded lying unattended. Hungry cats and mangy dogs prowled the streets, while cages, with skeletons of little birds in them, hung in the windows of empty houses

The three boys decided to stay put in Delhi till they could slip out and go to Bulundshahr "Don't stir out during day time," Govind cautioned the other two.

The very next day, they heard the sound of approaching feet. Some soldiers forced their way into the house. One of them slapped Govind, calling him a dirty rebel. Another asked in a menacing tone, "What valuables do you have? Where's the gold, silver, and jewellery?

"There's nothing here," Govind replied, glad that his mother, brothers and sisters were safe in Bulundshahr "Thank God!" he said to himself, 'the horse is no longer here and I have thrown the gun away. If they had caught me with those around, I wonder what they would have done."

"Don't try to be clever," one of the soldiers

snapped. "Your house is so big and prosperous-looking. Surely you have something of value."

"These kids are Hindus," said a soldier.

"What of it?" asked another

"Haven't you broken into enough houses to know that Hindus hide their valuables in the walls and Muslims beneath the floor?"

They started tapping the walls with their rifle butts, listening for the hollow sound that would indicate a secret hiding place for jewels and other valuables

Systematically they searched every part of the house. In the meantime, the boys shipped out and hid in one of the ruined houses in the back lane. They knew the soldiers would find nothing and be in a nasty mood. It was best to keep out of their way.

The boys returned after it was dark and could make out in the dim light several broken doors and windows Cupboards had been ripped open and furniture smashed

Thousands of houses in Delhi had been plundered or destroyed. In the palace, the Hall of

Audience had been turned into the headquarters mess and officers, sprawled on the gilded chairs of the Mughal rulers, puffed cheroots

The marble hall echoed the 'chip,chip,chip' of bayonets being used to prise the precious stones out of the mosaic.

It was solidly built and could be repaired when better times returned.
Govind fumed in hatred

against those who had not only despoiled the beautiful city of Delhi but were hanging rebels after mock trials.

"Bhola," said Govind after they had got over the initial shock, "let's go to Salma-bee's place. I do hope she has come to no harm."

To their great relief they found her sitting, as usual, outside her oneroomed hut. Seeing their worried faces she laughed and said, "Who will harm me? I have nothing of value Even my horse is old and not worth stealing."

The boys had to manage with the very little food left in the house. They ate sparingly.

One night, a man slipped in through the broken door "Who's there?" asked Govind, his heart thudding.

A familiar voice replied, "It's me, Chintamani."

Govind sprang to his feet. "What're you doing here? Don't you know that if the soldiers catch you, they'll hang you?"

"I came from Jhansi, thinking that, if the people here come to know of the gallant fight the Rani is putting up, they would be encouraged to do likewise. But soon after my arrival, Delhi fell. I have been hiding in ruined houses, but now I have come to you for help and shelter."

He looked shattered, his face was gaunt.

Govind welcomed him. "You must be hungry Chintamani. We don't have much to eat, but we'll share what there is."

"Don't worry Govind, I have been through worse." They had a light meal and discussed the events of the last few days.

Govind could not sleep for he was quite worried about Chintamani's safety. In the morning he said, "Chintamani, you must stay in the upper rooms. From our terrace, you can jump to the terrace of the next house. Many of the houses are empty and, if the soldiers come looking for rebels, you must escape across the roof."

Chintamani grinned.

"Am I a cat to be able to scale the roofs?"

"Don't joke, Chintamani. Your life's in terrible danger. We must think of a plan to get you out of Delhi."

Early the next morning, marching feet could be heard again outside and, in no time, several soldiers were inside the house. They went up and down looking for rebels, but Chintamani had disappeared and they found nothing suspicious.

Conditions in the city grew worse day by day

and they had hardly anything to eat. The three boys could have slipped out of the city, but they could not think of leaving Chintamani behind.

One afternoon, the boys were sitting in the courtyard when Jagannath saw a big rat and threw a stone at it. Instead of scurrying off, the rat dragged itself across the courtyard and hid behind an old bucket. Later, Bhola found it dead, with its paws sticking up.

The boys had seen several dead rats in the streets and the gutters. So they attached no significance to it. But, when Chintamani heard of it, he was pale in the face. "It is the plague," he said ominously.

The British too had discovered cases of plague
The disease starts in rats
and spreads to human
beings. It is deadly and
hardly anyone survives.
The only escape is to quit
the plague-infected area.

So, to control the dis-

ease, the British ordered the people of Delhi to leave the city.

The well-to-do and the able-bodied had already left the Capital. Now old men, women and children started streaming out of the Kashmiri, Mori, Lahori and other gates, their meagre belongings piled in handcarts.

Govind had thought of a plan to take Chintamani safely out of the city



"Chintamani", he said, "you'll leave the city disguised as a woman in purdah."

Chintamani burst out laughing. "I'm too tall and well-built to be mistaken for a woman, even if I were to use a burkha or cover my face with the border of a sari."

Govind had to concede the point. He kept thinking and came out with a new plan. "You could leave by tonga or ekka, with curtains drawn all round it, as if for a woman in purdah."

"That sounds better.
But how am I to get a tonga or ekka? Most of these have already left the city and we aren't likely to get a horse"

"There's Salma-bee's horse and tonga" Jagannath said, quite excited

"You're right!" exclaimed Govind but Bhola had his doubts." The horse is old and for years he hasn't drawn a tonga Besides, will Salma-bee agree to let her horse pull the tonga?"

"Let's ask her," said Govind.

Salma-bee was outraged at the thought of making her poor old horse work.

But when Govind explained about Chinta-

mani, she said, "You shall have my help. Your father was very kind to me and you boys have been good too. That apart, I'd like to help those who work for our country's freedom."

As they hitched the old horse to the tonga, the animal was most surprised. It was almost five years since he had pulled a tonga. But he was well-behaved and obedient and did not mind doing what he was trained to do

Salma-bee fished out the old sheets her husband had used to drape the tonga when it had women passengers.

"Here you are," she said. "Now take your friend. But be kind to my horse. He's old and can't pull too hard."

You're coming with us, "Salma-bee. We won't leave you behind." Govind was firm.

"I have no friends and relatives, *Beta*. I've lived here all my life and here I



shall die."

"We're your friends and we are for you You must come with us, Salma-bee."

But she would not agree until Chintamani said, "You must sit in the tonga with me, Salma-bee. In case the soldiers stop us and want to search the tonga for rebels, as they call us, you must speak from inside and say you don't want your face to be seen by strange men."

Salme-bee agreed to accompany them saying, "If you really need me, I shall be happy to oblige."

Chintamani had lived dangerously and was used to taking precautions. "Jagannath," he said, "you too should sit inside with Salma-bee and me."

"I'd prefer to walk with Govind bhaiya and Bhola," Jagannath protested.

"You'll have to sit with us," Chintaman: insisted "Then Govind can tell the soldiers that his wife's in the tonga. They'll hesitate to look inside if a young woman's there."

"But I'm not a young woman," Jagannath said indignantly

"But you're a young boy and your voice hasn't broken yet. It's shrill like a woman's and they'll take you to be a woman." After some persuasion, Jagannath agreed.

Salma-bee, Chintamani and Jagannath, wearing saris, got into the tonga, while Govind and Bhola walked beside the horse, coaxing it to pull it along.

Soldiers, guns at the ready, stopped them near Lahori Gate

Govind said humbly, "Please let us go, *Huzoor*. My cla mother and wife are in the *tonga*."

"How do I know you aren't hiding rebels inside?" a soldier said rudely, striding upto the carriage. He was about to draw the sheet aside when Govind had an inspiration

"My mother's very ill, "Iuzoor," he whispered, "Please don't disturb her."

"What's wrong with he "the soldier asked his fingers clutching the sheet.

"I don't know, Huzoor. but she has high fever and there's a swelling in her armpit. My wife's with her, taking care of her." Raising his voice he said, "How're you feeling now, Aminaji?"

Salma-bee was quick on the uptake. She groaned 'oudly and cried, "Hai! I'm in great pain. I'm dying. What shall I do?"

Jagannath said in a

shrill voice, "Please be brave *Ammaji*. We'll look after you."

Salma-bee put out a thin, shaking hand and caught hold of the soldier's coat. "Don't delay us, *Huzoor*," she wailed, don't delay us. I must reach home before I die."

Salma-bee's hand was so shrivelled and claw-like and she groaned so realistically that the soldiers hastily drew back, convinced that she was dying of the plague.

The one who had tried to draw the sheet, let go of it as if a *cobra* had stung him and frantically waved the *tonga* on.

Soon the party crossed the Yamuna by the bridge of boats.

They stopped in a lonely place and Chintamani and Jagannath got out of the vehicle.

"I must take leave of you. Thank you all for helping me," said a grateful Chintamani.

"Don't go Chintamanı" urged Govind "Come with us to Bulundshahr. You'll be safe in my uncle's house."

Chintamani shook his head. "All of you have done enough for me Govind, you are a worthy son of your father and he'll be proud of you." Blushing with pride, Govind asked, "Where're you going, Chintamani?"

"Perhaps to Lucknow.
Perhaps to Agra. Or even back to Jhansi. I haven't decided, but I'll go where people are still fighting for freedom."

They bade him an affectionate goodbye.

That was the last they saw of him. They did not know whether he died fighting or was caught and hanged as a rebel or was living somewhere secretly working for the country's freedom.

The party set out for Bulundshahr on foot,

leaving the *tonga* behind. Govind led the old horse by the bridle.

On the way to Bulundshahr, they passed looted villages and burning huts.

When they reached Bulundshahr, they found no one at Ganga Prasad's house. Govind guessed they had fled to the village where Ganga Prasad had a farm and an orchard. So they made their way to the village a few kilometers away.

Govind and Jagannath found their mother, brother and sister safe with Ganga Prasad's family. Rukmini embraced her sons and wept for joy.

They all lived quietly in the village for a couple of months. Salma-bee stayed with them.

When winter set in and the danger of plague was over, they made their way back to Delhi.

Salma- bee and her horse managed the journey well. They were both happy to be home again.

They found the days sadly changed. Gone was the glitter and importance of the imperial capital. But the city was slowly limping back to normal.

To be continued

DEATH

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For each and every twing creature

Vivek Matmari (13)

PEN-FRIENDS CORNER

J. Umesh Kumar (boy, 14)
H.N. 15-3-123
Majwada Muncipality
Qrts.
Warangal
Andhra Pradesh, India
Drawing, singing
Any country

5366 Ritika Vadehra (girl, 11) M-96 Greater Kailash II New Delhi 110048, India Reading, swimming U.S.A., India

5367 M.S. Raghavendra (b, 13) 867/2 2nd Cross Sunnadakarı Mysore 570024 Karnataka, India Stamps, cricket Any country

5368
Sareeta Ngairangban
(g, 16)
Pearce House
Sandur Residential School
Shivpur, Sandur
Bellary Dist. 583119
Karnataka, India
Cycling, painting
Any country

5369 Nar Bahadui Biswa (b, 16) C/o Damphu Post Office P/o Chirang Bhutan Chess, stamps Japan, Nepal

5370
Pallavi M. (g, 11)
C/o Sr. Jennette
St. Mary's Convent High
School, Station Road
Raichur 584101
Karnataka
Reading, pen-friends
India

5371
Saradındu Chaudharı
(b, 13)
D-29, B.S.L. Colony
Dugdhı, Dıst Bokaro
Bıhar, India
Collecting stamps, reading
Japan, U.S.A.

5372 K. Sudha (g, 14) D/o S.S Krishnan H/227, Phase 1, Ashok Vihar Delhi 110052, India Handwork, reading U.S.A., U.K

5373
Rajıv Ranjan Tıwarı
(b, 13)
Q.No. F/L-15 Chandrapura
Dıst. Bokaro,
Bıhar 825303, India
Drawing, reading
U.S.A., Japan

5374
Neha Mittal (g, 11)
154/3 Rani Jhansi Road
Civil Lines, Ludhiana
Punjab, India
Badminton, collecting coins
Any country

Joe John (b. 16)
Roll No. 2519
V.K. Krishna Menon House
Sainik School, P.O.
Kazhakuttom
Trivandrum 695585
Kerala, India
No particular hobby
Any country

5376
M.V Thankam (g, 14)
Kailasam, T.C. 9/1050
Mangalam Lane,
Sasthamangalam
Thiruvananthapuram695010
Kerala, India
Reading, dancing
Any country

5377
Nishant C.A. (b, 16)
Roll No. 2453, Sainik School
Kazhakootam, Trivandrum
Kerala, India
Pop music, trekking
Israel, U.S.A.

5378 Sameera Ranjan (g, 9) Stall 'Q', South Patel Nagar New Delhi 110008, India Badminton, skating U.S.A., U.A.E.

5379 Vinayak Sarogi (b, 14) Room No. 217, House No. 5 Rajasthan Hostel, Pilani 333031 Rajasthan, India Movies, making pen-friends India, Switzerland

5380 Bhawna Biharilal Khatri (g, 16)Avihant Co. Society A/3, Moolji Nagar Sai Baba Mandir Road, S.V. Road Bombay 400092, India Movies, music Switzerland, Japan

5381 Mahesh Kumar S. Patel (b, 15)Gayatrı Krupa Sadan Dist. Mahesaral UT P.O. Dehadu 382812 Ta: Vijapur, India Sports, reading U.S.A., U.K.

5382 Neelam Kadam (g, 16) Rly. Qrts. 49/2 Kandıvlı (W) Bombay 400067, India Reading, collecting stamps Nepal, Pakistan

5383 Mominur Rahman (b, 15) Class IX, Sec. B

Goalpara, P.O. Rajapara Assam 783133. India Breakdance, sightseeing India, any country

5384 Lexang Pem Dechen (g, 13)Jigme Sherubling High School, Class VII-A, Eastern Bhutan Reading, collecting coins Any country

Aroop Dutta (b, 10) C/o Mr. J.K. Dutta Afforestation Project Forest Office, Gyalegphug Bhutan Collecting coins and stamps Japan, China

5386 Neethu Sonia (g. 13) Rensila Near Sadhoo Beedi Godown Kannur 670006 Kerala, India Movies, music Any country

5387 Vilas Verma (b, 13) D-208, Sector 55, NOIDA Dist. Ghaziabad 201301 U.P., India Collecting stamps and coins Any country

5388 Lydia Thomas (g, 13) 1/604, Petercillie Street

Roll No. 2634, Sainik School Fort, Cochin, Kerala, India Music, reading Any country

> 5389 Raghav Rajan (b, 14) 83, II Main Road, Gandhinagar Adyar, Madras 600020 Tamıl Nadu, India Tennis, collecting stamps Finland, Chile

5390 Nalını Agarwal (g, 14) C/o Manoj Dairy 7th Mile, Kalimpong Dist. Darjeeling, W. Bengal, India Music, playing guitar and piano Any country

5391 Regish M.R. (b. 15) Ashoka House Sainik School Kazhakootam Thiruvananthapuram-695585 Kerala, India Philately, photography India, France

5392 Priya Vijay Shetye (g, 15) 112 A/3 Prabhat Road 14th Cross Lane, Pune 411004 Maharashtra, India Skating, collecting stamps India, Russia

5393 Kishan A. Sood (b, 16) X/14 Ghanshyam Nagar Society, Subhash Bridge Ahmedabad 380027 Gujarat, India Collecting coins, swimming Any country

5394
Surbhi Tuli (g, 12)
B/3, 96-B, Lawrence Road
New Delhi 110035, India
Making pen-friends,
computers
Any country

5395
Nitin Arora (b, 15)
S/o Shri Shyam Sunder
Arora
C-16, N.F.L. Township,
Bhatinda
Punjab, India
Writing poetry, playing
instrumental music
U.S.A., Japan

5396
Prajkta Parab (g, 13)
201/202, G-1, 2nd Floor
Misquita Nagar
Vidya Mandir Road,
Dahisar (E)
Bombay 400068, India
Reading, making
pen-friends
U.S.A., U.K.

Gautam M. (b, 8) C/o Dr. B. Mohanan CPX/8, Chandramangalam N.C.C. Road, Peroorkada Thiruvananthapuram 695005 Kerala, India Painting, chess Any country

5398
Lakshmi Sıvadas (g, 11)
"Saraswathy Vılas"
Yakkara Road
Opp. D.P.O. Palakkad-4
Kerala 678004, Kerala
Painting, collecting pictures
Any country

5399
Rajiv Kumar (b, 13)
1228, Sector XII-F
Bokaro Steel City
Dist. Bokaro, Bihar 827012
India
Stamp collecting, football
U.S.A., Germany

5400
Neha Kachroo (g, 7)
'Nand House', Palace Road
Solan, Himachal Pradesh
India
Cycling, collecting greeting
cards
Any country

5401
Sanjeev Kumar (b, 10)
1228, Sector XII-F
Bokaro Steel City,
Dist. Bokaro
Bihar 827012, India
Cycling, cricket
China, Japan

5402 Pooja Kachroo (g, 11) 'Nand House', Palace Road Solan, Himachal Pradesh India Skating, reading Any country other than India

5403
Pankaj Kumar Singh
(b, 13)
1231, Sector XII-F
Bokaro Steel City,
Dist. Bokaro
Bihar 827012, India
Hobbies not mentioned
U.S.A., Germany

5404
Sunitha Gurung (g, 16)
Royal Technical Institute
Kharbandi,
P.O. Phuntsholing
Phuntsholing, Bhutan
Singing, cycling
Any country

5405 Amar R. Jariwala (b, 13) C/o Dr. R.M. Jariwala Wadi Falia, Daman 396210 Collecting stamps, cricket U.S.A., U.K.

Susma Rai (g, 16)
Royal Technical Institute
Kharbandi
P.O. Phuntsholing
Phuntsholing, Bhutan
Reading, making penfriends
Any country

5407 Om Kumar Chetri (b, 15) Kangpara Primary School Thrimsing, Tashigang East Bhutan Reading, football Bhutan 5408 Vandana Jain (g. 14) ND-10 Pitampura Delhi 110034, India Sports, reading U.S.A., France

5409 Lloyd Pinto (b, 13) Nazarene Shopping Centre S. Vidya (g, 14) Shivaji Chowk Bhavandar (West) Maharashtra 401101 India Collecting stamps, reading U.S.A.

5410 Jayasurya R (g, 11) Jyothirmaya Nechipozhoor P.O. Pala, Kottayam Kerala, India Music, painting U.S.A., Japan

5411 Dhanraj Solanki (b, 11) Plot No. 63311, Sector 30 Gandhi Nagar, Gujarat India Collecting stamps, reading U.S.A., Japan

5412 Divya Chaturvedi (g, 10) Qr. 803, Sector 5 R.K. Puram New Delhi 110022, India Reading, badminton Australia, U.K.

5413 Tenzin Lekden (b, 12)

Class VII Central School for Tibetans P.O. Gurupura 571188 Hunsur, Ta: Mysore Karnataka, India Reading, collecting coins Any country

5414 Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya Karura, Kotia P.O. Mohendragarh Dist. Haryana 123027, India Painting, playing Any country

5415 Basheer Ahmed K. (b, 14) Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya Minicoy P.O., U.T. of Lakshadweep-682559 India Collecting stamps and coins, reading Any country

5416 H.M. Medha (g, 13) Shanti House Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya Gajanur, Shimoga Dist. Karnataka, India Collecting soap covers and stamps Any country

5417 Roopesh Kumar Gulechha (b 15) 382, 2nd Floor

S.B. Cross Road, V.V. Puram Bangalore 560004 Karnataka, India Collecting stamps, reading Singapore, Japan

5418 Megali Aggarwal (g, 15) 1743 Dariba Kalan Chandni Chowk Delhi 110006, India Dancing, painting India, Europe

5419 Mahaveer Kumar Bafua (b, 15)Mahaveer Saree Centre No. 8/13, Basav Raja Market, O.K. Road Bangalore 560002 Karnataka, India Sports, reading Germany, France

5420 Sudeshna Chakraborty (g, 9)C/o Dr. S. Chakraborty IBR-28, IIT Campus Kharagpur 721302 West Bengal, India Writing stories, pen-friendship Any country

5421 Mitesh Kumar Gulechha (b, 12)382, 2nd Floor S.B. Cross Road V.V. Puram, Bangalore 560004 Karnataka, India

Hobbies not mentioned U.S.A., U.K.

5422
Nimmy M. (g, 15)
Nishanivas, T.C. 14/1644
Varose Junction
University P.O.
Thiruvananthapuram
Kerala, India
Making friends, cricket
Pakistan, U.K.

5423

Roopesh Kumar Gulechha (b, 15) 382, 2nd Floor S.B. Cross Road V.V. Puram Bangalore 560004 Karnataka, India Collecting stamps, reading U.S.A., Japan

5424
Dorji Dema Drukpa
(g, 15)
C/o Y. Wangdi A.W.P.
Distillery, Sanchi
Bhutan
Making friends, dancing
Any country

5425 Arvind K. (b, 16) S/o Mr. B.S. Kora H.No. 241, Ward No. 3 Old Pate, Bagal Kote Karnataka, India Music, games Any country

5426 Tias Thakur (g, 13) Class VII, Ramakrishna Mission Vidyapeeth P.O. Vivekananda Nagar Dist. Purulia 723147 West Bengal, India Collecting stamps and coins, Pen-friends U.S.A., U.K.

5427
Sanjay Kumar Verma
(b, 16)
Kalyankunj
142 Subhash Nagar
P.O. Clementown
Dehradun, U.P. 248002
India
Music, gardening
India, Thailand

5428
Pushpa (g, 15)
Sector 12 F, Qr. No 1224
Bokaro Steel City, Bokaro
Bihar, India
Collecting stamps, chess
Pakistan, U.S.A.

5429
V.V. Balaji Viswanathan
(b, 10)
97, North Street
Kilvelur 611104
Tamil Nadu, India
Reading, chess
Any country

5430
Sumi Francis (g, 11)
Kendriya Vidyalaya
Newsprint Nagar
Kottayam Dist.
Kerala 686616, India
Collecting stamps,
gardening
Israel, India

5431
Mohd Akbar Khan (b, 15)
Hostel No. 4, Jamia Sr.
Secondary School, Jamia
Nagar
New Delhi 110025, India
Cricket, football
U.K., Australia

5432 Simi Maria Jacob (g, 12) Kendriya Vidyalaya Newsprint Nagar Kottayam Dist. Kerala 686616 Collecting stamps India

5433 Vishnu Manjrekar (b, 12) M P.T. Colony Building No. 187 1/2 'A' Type, Head-hand, Sada Vasco 403804, Goa, India Collecting coins and stamps, badminton U.S.A., Russia

5434
Deepa Changrani (g, 16)
T A.X.-47, Adipur (Kutch)
Gujarat 370205, India
Reading, painting
Any country

5435
Ritin Tandon (b, 13)
119/5 Devlok Housing
Complex
Church Road, Vishnupuri
Aligunj, Lucknow 226020
U.P., India
Correspondence, writing
poetry
Any country







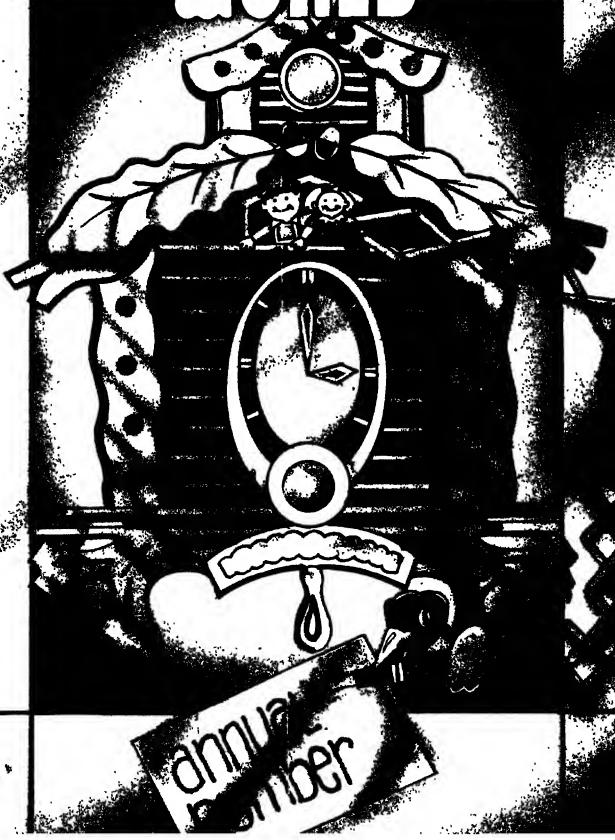
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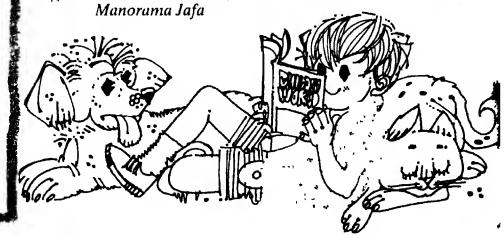
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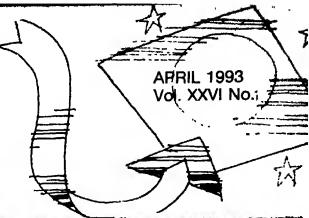
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WORLD





A GIFT FOR UMA

E Shailaja Nair

A LETTER TO YOU

THE TREASURE BOX

Sarojini Sinha

BINIYA

Naresh Varma

AN EDITOR REMEMBERS

K Ramakrishnan

THE BIG CATCH

Alaka Shankar

MY FIRST LESSON

V Suba

BOOK NEWS

JOKES





Tiger transparency page 82–83 Phal S. Girota

Dear Readers...

The clock ticks on steadily and from striking months from issue to issue for Children's World, this month it marks its 26th birthday. Twenty-six years! For those of us who were in school in 1968 when the magazine was launched, it seems like a lifetime gone by But age becomes a magazine. It adds allure as it matures. For its new readers, in each generation, it provides perpetual fascination in its youthful unveiling of fact, figures and fiction. Between covers, it quite literally opens doors to a brave new world, its windows, ventilators and open spaces, being the bonuses

The reproduction of some of the evergreen articles, stories and poems from old issues from the April 1991 issue through the April 1992 issue convinced us that there were few amongst its ardent readers and even fewer among its sincere contributors who had not carved a niche for themselves in this vast and varied world

Today, when Shankar is no more, and the magazine has seen generations go by, this thought must afford great satisfaction to the soul of the man who founded the magazine, and to those associated with it in any capacity

On the threshold of a period, when not just the century but the millennia takes a turn, it is to be fervently hoped that readers of *Children's World* will continue to be so discerning as to absorb through its pages all that is desirable in making this world a wonderful and peaceful one and return to Nature her original glory

In a world torn by strife, hatred, division on the basis of caste, creed, colour and religion, our endeavour has been to believe in and reflect a humane world that knows no other religion but the brotherhood of children That we got the whole-hearted support of our readers, contributors and well-wishers, is what helped us to make *Children's World* "entertaining and educative" so that "growing-up became an exciting adventure"

No cakes, bouquets, silver bells or celebrations to mark our silver jubilee or completion of twenty-five years would be meaningful for us, if it did not involve our readers. And so, in deference to your repeated requests, we announce a competition. The most exciting event of the year, the writing for Your Pages in the November Special Issue, comes with prizes attached this time.- (Details on page 27) So, if exams are over and the head is full of ideas and imagination, get down to work

For those of you who missed having a calender within the folds of the magazine—this month we bring you a pull-out picture to put over your desks. How does going wild over sharing, strike you as a lovely reminder of what Children's World means to you?

In a no-holds barred article, the former Editor of Children's World Mr K.Raniakrishnan, tells readers about what Children's World meant to him and what it was like in its infancy, elsewhere in the magazine

A new serial story, additional comics, all go on to make this a very special **Annual** number for you Enjoy it and God bless you



Story: Cheryl Rao Illustrations: Viky Arya

HY can't we go to Aunty Seema's place? Why do we have to go to Grandma and Grandpa? There's no company for us there!" Rohan wailed.

"Aunty Seema has already made her own plans for her holiday and can't take you with her. But she'll be visiting Grandma later and you'll meet her there," Mumny replied.

"Let us come with you then, Mummy," Naina said plaintively. "We won't get in your way and ask to come shopping with you."

"You can't accompany us, pet," Mummy said.
"Daddy's on a business tour and both of us will be too busy to make the trip pleasant for you. I'm sorry children, but you'll have to go to Grandma's. She's looking forward to seeing the two of you and so is Grandpa."

The children looked downcast, thinking of the rambling old house on the hillside, above the village. Nothing ever happened there! It was a small hamlet in the Western Ghats. where the only excitement was provided by pilgrims who wound their way to the shrine beside the miniature lake. Whenever they had been on holidays with their parents, they were not allowed to wander around on their own They had not made friends and had not explored the beautiful countryside, thus missing out on the joy of visiting a quiet hill station.

Naturally, their memories of Grandma's house were anything but exciting—dull mornings playing in the garden with Rani, their grandparent's dog, dreary afternoons while the grown-ups took

their siesta or read or knitted, while they were expected to stay in their room and keep out of the many locked doors in the house, a staid walk to the village general store every evening for bread. How could they look forward to another six weeks of such a routine?

The children found it impossible to respond to their mother's determined efforts to keep up a lively conversation on the way to her parents' home. "Did you grow up here, Ma?" Rohan asked wonderingly, finding it difficult to visualise his vivacious mother in such dull surroundings.

"No, I didn't. Grandpa settled here after he retired, and by then, I was in a college hostel. I've never seen the house properly myself!"

"You mean, you haven't been into all those rooms and explored them?" Naina inquired.

"No," Ma laughed.
"When I came home for
the holidays, I'd bring my
friends with me and we'd
go riding or hiking right
up into the hills. We didn't
get to know the village
and its inhabitants. You
can do that when you're a
little older."

But now! Rohan thought. Now what do we do with ourselves in a place which even you don't care much about?

He was still in a sulky, resentful mood as the car swung into the wooded driveway and raised a cloud of red dust as it purred upwards to the house. The U-shaped bungalow nestling half-way up the hill seemed to stretch out its arms in a

welcoming gesture and for the first time since they'd heard of the plans for their holiday, Rohan and Naina felt a thrill of anticipation surge through them. "We'll make the holiday exciting," Rohan told himself and as he looked across at his sister, he could see the same suppressed excitement in her eyes.

Grandma was on the steps, smiling happily and almost pathetically eager to admire the grandchildren she'd not met for three years. The children and their mother felt a twinge of guilt, for having been reluctant to visit the old people and for having failed to do so for such a long time

Grandpa came in from the garden and stomped

towards them. "Hrumph! So you're here at last! And about time too!" he commented caustically, not sparing their feelings. "You seem to think of your old parents only in time of need, Shakoo," he grumbled to his youngest child.

Ma laughed and hugged him. "Don't be grouchy, Daddy! I've almost begged you to come to Bombay and stay with us all these years. But you refuse to move out and refuse to consider Madhav's commitments at work, which prevents us from coming here."

Grandpa refused to smile. "But you made it here now that you want us to look after your children while you gallivant around Europe!" he said and would have continued



if Grandma had not shushed him.

"Come now Ramoo, you could give them a better welcome than that. couldn't you?" and putting her arms around the bewildered children, she drew them inside the house. "I'll show you to your room. Now that you're bigger, I'm sure you'll be able to find plenty to do inside and outside the house. I wish I were young again and able to clear out all the rooms that remain boarded up most of the time. You can do that, children. You're bound to find many things of interest, for the original owners left piles of old trunks and books which their nephews and nieces didn't seem to want when they inherited the house. Grandpa's been telling me for years to just have a bonfire of all that, but I can't make myself do it, knowing that someday, my treasured possessions too may meet a similar fate at a stranger's hand."

Grandma rambled on as she poured milk for them and cut generous slices of home-made chocolate cake. The children weren't hungry for they had munched chips and biscuits on the journey, but Grandma's cake was too attractive to resist and soon they were licking the icing off their fingers and looking forward to some more of Grandma's cooking in the days ahead.

Ma did her best throughout tea to cajole her father, and presently the adults too were laughing and exchanging stories of Ma's childhood, and the pranks she and her two brothers had got upto. Naina's eyes grew round as she listened and she breathed, "But Ma, you always tell me that girls don't do things like that—climbing trees and playing leapfrog and all!"

"Hey, what are you doing listening to all this?" Ma scolded goodnaturedly. "Off you go to your room—don't you get ideas from adult talk and trouble your grandparents when I'm gone!"

Rohan and Naina
jumped up and skipped
out of the room. "Look at
the number of rooms,"
Rohan whispered as they
went down the corridor
into one wing of the house.
How could Grandma keep
them shut all these
years?"

"If they have all this wood panelling and so many nooks and niches, there are bound to be

secret cupboards and plenty for us to find," Naina replied excitedly. But her brother did not show the same enthusiasm as she did.

"Don't get overexcited, kid." he advised. "All we'll find are some musty old books and old fashioned clothes. Do you think people are so foolish as to sign over their relative's property if they have even the faintest suspicion of hidden wealth? There won't be anything here, and I for one am not going to spend my time rummaging around in someone's old trunks! I'd rather be out in the garden with Grumps, or on my own in the hills. I'll take Rani with me if you don't want to come along!" he added.

"Of course I want to come with you!" Naina replied hurriedly, not wanting to be left to 'ladylike' pursuits by her elder brother. "But I'd like to go through the locked up rooms also! Why can't we do both together? And why are you calling Grandpa 'Grumps'?"

Rohan chuckled. "Well he has been grumpy since we've come, hasn't he?"

"Don't let him hear you or you'll be punished good and proper!" Naina warned, though she giggled at her brother's nickname for Grandpa.

Over the next few days, while their mother was still with them, the children got reacquainted with Rani and with the sprawling house. Rohan clumped around with Grandpa in the garden enjoying the old man's remarks and repeating them to Naina when he was out of hearing.

Rani, the German Shepherd, was happy to have young, energetic company and she followed the children everywhere, often bringing a stone or a worn out tennis ball to them, with a desperate plea in her eyes. "She wants us to throw it for her to retrieve," Naina said, as she took the ball from Rani's mouth and tossed it up. In one smooth leap Rani caught it before it struck the ground, and Rohan applauded. "Let's see if you can get it now," he called, and threw the ball among the trees. Rani was off like a shot, her long, fluffy tail making graceful circular motions in the air as she ran. She disappeared for a moment, then came bounding back, the ball firmly between her teeth, her mouth stretched into what looked very much like a victorious

smile.

Accompanied by the formidable looking dog, the children tramped up the hill on which the house was built. "We'd better not wander too far from home," Naina, ever the cautious one, said. "We don't want Mummy forbidding us from going on these excursions, because that would ruin our holiday. As long as she's here, let's keep close to the house and get back soon."

Rohit, realising that she was right, curbed his natural instinct to explore the other side of the hill and turned back.

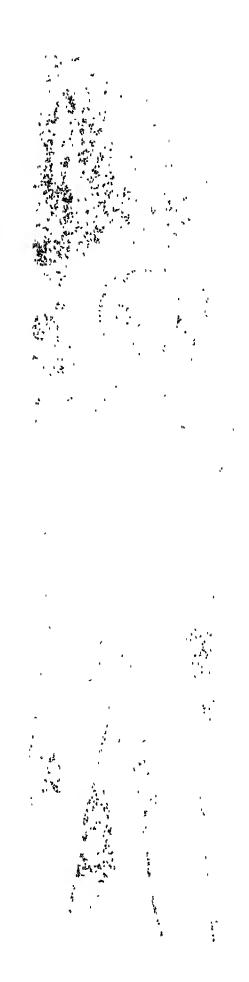
Inside the house, they peered into rooms where furniture was covered with dust sheets that made ghostly shapes. Naina lost herself there, lifting up drapes, touching the panelling and peeping into cupboards. "Old things have such a mysterious smell. Have you noticed it, Rohan?" she asked.

"That's the odour of mildew and dampness not of mystery, dear sister," Rohan scoffed. "Stop being over-romantic! You're not going to find anything of value here!"

But Naina persisted, and almost as if the elements were aiding her,

CHILDREN'S WORLD APRIL 1993





soon after their mother left for Bombay, there were heavy unseasonal showers which confined the children indoors. For lack of any other pastime, Rohan joined her as she opened trunks of books and unveiled chipped and shaking dining chairs and old fashioned capacious sofas. "I can understand going through the trunks, but what's the idea of dusting this furniture and polishing it? The chairs look like they'll collapse at any moment. The springs of the sofas must be gone and we'd sink right through—they definitely won't withstand our weight."

"Oh, Rohan, you don't appreciate the beauty of all these things. Look how they are carved. Think of the effort which has gone into making it a thing of beauty!"

"Oh sis, a chair is a chair is a chair is a chair. That's it! Now hand me some of those books. I'll go through them and see if any are worth reading or all should be sold to the raddi-wallah." He sat down on one of the sofas he had just denigrated and sank deep into its soft depths, with a whoosh. Naina peered over the top at him, trying to suppress

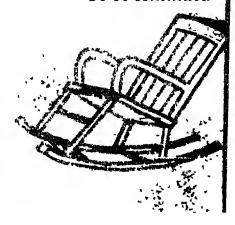
her giggles, but not succeeding. Rohan glared at her. "What's so funny? I'm quite comfortable. Try the other sofa and see for yourself."

Naina obligingly
plopped down and
promptly disappeared
from sight, only her legs
waving in the air, as she
tried desperately to right
herself. This time Rohan
gave in to his mirth and
both of them went into
paroxsyms of laughter.
Grandma heard the merriment and came to the
door, her heart warming
at the sight of the happy
children.

"Oh Grandma," spluttered Naina, "can we make this into our own sitting room and have 'pretend' parties here?"

"Of course you can," replied Grandma, "but be careful not to hurt yourself with the furniture. We won't be repairing it—only getting rid of it once your mother and her brothers have declared that they don't want it."

To be continued



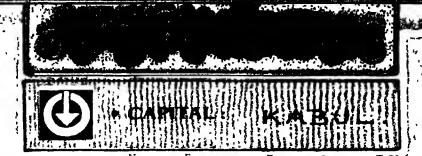




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HERAT, KANDAHAR, BAGHLAN, AND KHUI.







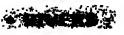
NOVEMBER 19, 1946.





DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC.





FARAH,
HELMAND,
KABUL, KHASH,
AMU DARYA



SULPHUR, IRON, ZINC, SALT, LEAD, PRECIOUS AND SEMI-PRECIOUS STONES.



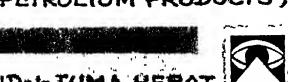


CARPETS, KARAKUL SKIN,

WOOL AND COTTON.



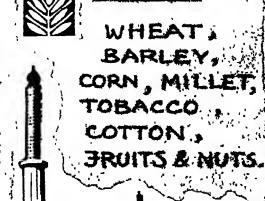
FOODSTUFFS, PETROLIUM PRODUCTS,



MASJID-I-JUMA, HERAT. MAUSOLEUM OF NADIR SHAH, A



APRIL 27







Story: O.P. Bhagat Illustrations: R. Ashish Bagchi

OOR Mohammed was a farmer. He was honest and hard-working. But so small was his piece of land that he grew just enough to feed his wife and himself.

At times Noor Mohammed wished that he were rich and had plenty of everything. One morning, while he spread his prayer mat near the hearth and offered namaz, he called upon God to make him rich.

"You are merciful, Allah," he muttered.
"Make me rich. But send me riches on my hearth."

After that he ate a frugal breakfast and went to



work in his field. A thorny bush growing there caught his salwar and tore it at one or two places.

Annoyed, Noor Mohammed decided to uproot the bush. As he dug it up, he noticed what looked like a lid. He lifted it and saw a jar buried in there. It was full of gold coins.

Noor Mohammed was thrilled. Then he remembered that he had prayed for riches on his hearth. He shook his head as if saying no to the treasure he had found.

He put the lid back on the jar, filled the pit with earth and set about his work. He worked there all day long. In the evening he went back home. Casually he told his wife about the jar of gold coins and what he had done with it.

"A jar of gold coins!" exclaimed his wife in disbelief. Her voice turned to a shriek as she added, "You found it and left it there! My bad luck that I married a fool like you!"

She was so angry that she would not cook the evening meal for him. Then an idea came into her head. She was at once quiet. She cooked the meal and placed it before him.

Noor Mohammed ate it. Tired as he was, he lay down to rest. Before long sleep came over him.

His wife waited until it was silent all around. This meant that all the neighbours were sleeping. Like a cat she slipped out and knocked at the next door.

A sleepy Jan Mohammed opened it. Both he and his wife were surprised to see her at that



hour. "Is everything all right?" they asked.

With a finger on her lips the caller signalled them to keep their voices low. She stepped in and, almost in whispers, said, "I need your help, good neighbour."

And she explained how her husband had found a jar full of gold coins in his field. But the madcap had left it there because Allah had not sent the gold on his hearth.

"If you go and quietly fetch the jar," she said, "I promise to give you half the gold."

Jan Mohammed agreed. And, with a spade on his shoulder, he set out. The moon was nearly full. He had no difficulty in seeing his way.

In Noor Mohammed's field he spotted the thorny bush that lay uprooted. If Near it the loose soil indicated that the jar lay is buried there. He dug at the place and glimpsed the lid. Eagerly he lifted it.

But his fervour turned to fright. In the jar lay snakes, hissing and writhing. Jan Mohammed put the lid back.

His legs shook as he made for home. He was angry with Noor Mohammed and his wife. It seemed that the two had





plotted to have him bitten by the snakes. After his death they expected to grab his land.

At the thought he stopped. He would pay the crafty couple back in their own coin.

He went back to the jar and carefully dug it out. With greater care he carried it on his shoulder and walked homeward.

It was past midnight when he reached Noor Mohammed's cottage. From the back side he climbed up the roof. The jar was in his hands, with the lid securely on it.

He tiptoed to the chimney-and paused for breath. Then he heaved the jar up, quickly removed the lid and emptied it — the whole of it — into the pipe. He could hear the snakes falling on the hearth.

The task done, he hastened back to his cottage. 'When Noor and his wife wake up in the morning,' he said in his mind 'they will be greeted by the snakes. And they will die the death they planned for me.'

They day dawned. A godfearing man. Noor Mohammed washed his hands and feet. He took his prayer mat and spread it near the hearth. And he offered his early morning nammaz.

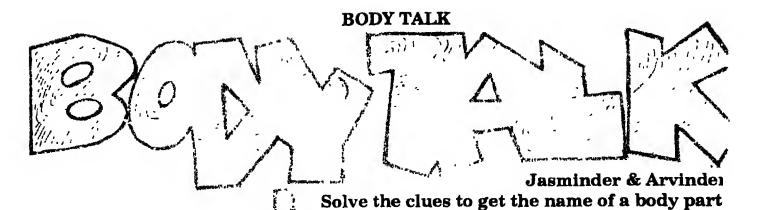
As he got up, he saw something gleaming on the hearth. There was a heap, a big heap, of the gold coins he had seen the day before.

"O merciful Allah," he said, kneeling in gratitude, "Your bounty is endless. You have graciously sent me riches on my hearth."

Author's Note

Many and varied are the folktales of Afghanistan. In some of them you will come across Indian characters. This is not surprising. The links between India and Afghanistan go back to thousands of years.

But Afghanistan tales are not easy to come by. The only collection I am aware of is Folktales of Afghanistan by Asha Dhar. This volume is one of the many in a series of folktales of the world. Pub: Sterling Publishers, Put Ltd.



1. The policeman said, "You'd better get it off your"

- 5. Please lend me a with my work.
- 6. He has a in every pie.
- 8. Keep your up and be brave.
- 11. Talk softly, even walls have
- 13. Be on your, there may be trouble.
- 14. Don't take him seriously, he's only pulling your
- 15. He's a weak person, he has no

II

2. Scoring a century in the last cricket match has

gone to his

- 3. The cowardly villain had no for the fight.
- 4. The horror film made Rajni's stand on end.
- 6. I asked my Dad for a bike but he put his down and refused.
- 7. My mother turned a blind to the mess in my room.
- 9. The best way to get there is to follow your
- 10. The runners finished the race and
- 12. After winning the title in chess, Anand was welcomed with open

Answers to Body Talk

1. Chest, 5. Hand, 6. Finger, 8. Chin, 13. Toes, 14. Leg, 15. Spine.

2. Head, 3. Stomach, 4. Hair, 6. Foot, 7. Eye, 9. Nose, 10. Neck, 12. Arms.

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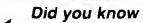
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stage with the spot light on her. She was twirling on her toes and then leaping into air in perfect ballet movements. It was the Swan Song.

Then someone interrupted, "Neha, Neha, wake up." There was a furious tugging at her sheet. Raghav was shaking her awake. "Come here, see this," he shouted when she opened her eyes. Neha was angry at being woken up so rudely but she couldn't resist her curiosity. "What's it?" she asked rubbing her eyes.

"Your picture is in the newspaper," Raghav said seriously, holding the paper slightly away from his elder sister.

Neha snatched the paper. "Where?" she asked eagerly, flicking the pages.

"There, can't you see?" said Raghav pointing to a picture of an elephant, and he burnt out laughing.

Story: Vinita Agarwal

"You beast," Neha shot out a hand to hit him but he was too quick for her.

As Neha recollected her dream, tears stung her eyes. She knew she was fat. "Ten ton," they called her at school behind her back. Even papa called her "my fatty", fondly. He did not know she hated it. Every time she put an extra piece of cake or picked up a packet of potato wafers Mummy gave her a 'this is your last' look.



Illustrations: Chaitali Chatterjee

Uncle said he didn't mind her being fat, "I like you the way you are, but I think you should exercise."

So, Neha skipped a hundred times in the morning and a hundred times at night. She avoided all cakes, ice-cream and chips, whenever she could, but she felt she would always be fat.

Over the breakfast table, Raghav layered his

bread thickly with butter "Utterly butterly delicious," he sang out, smiling at a visibly agitated Neha. Then with mock seriousness he turned to father, "Papa why are some people fat and others thin?"

Papa gave him a warning look and turned to his cup of tea.

Neha gave Raghav a sound kick under the table. "Ouch, Mama," Raghav wailed, louder than he had been hit.

"Neha, behave like a lady," Mama scolded.

"Fat lady", Raghav scowled.

In the school bus Neha sat in the lone vacant seat and did not move over for Raghav as usual. He was becoming a pest and needed a lesson, she thought, as the bus gave a jolt.

Studies came easily to Neha so she enjoyed school. The only time she hated it was the recess. With the teachers out of sight, the juniors and at times even her own classmates would call her 'ten ton', 'fatty' or even 'Hardy'. Normally she turned a deaf ear to these remarks but today she was in no mood to hear them. So she decided to stay in class and finish her homework during recess. Even during class she could not concentrate and the dream haunted her.

"Change your clothes before you go to play," Mummy said in the afternoon. Neha rummaged through her cupboard (while Mummy chose Raghav's clothes, Neha was free to wear what she liked).

"I'm going to wear jeans today," Neha thought, desperately going through her clothes.

As she tried them on she was dismayed, "Oh no, it must have shrunk. Mummy must have got it washed." She tried to find a label with a cautionary mark of 'dry clean only' but there were no black crosses or such labels. It could be hand washed or machine washed.

However, she struggled into them, pulled on the sweater and confidently, though stiffly, marched out. Raghav was ready and Mummy was counting out the clothes for the press wallah.

Raghav took one look at her and burst out laughing. "You are too fat for jeans but just right for this bed sheet," he sang picking up a petticoat and bed sheet from the pile.

Mummy said disapprovingly, "Are you going to

play in that?"

This was too much for Neha. "I'm not going to play," she said furiously and walked back to her bedroom.

She was sad and too angry to cry but in her heart she felt miserable. She flopped into the bed. All kinds of thoughts floated through her mind. "What if I run away? It



would teach them a lesson." For some time she lay in her bed with eyes tightly shut, ignoring the shouts of children outside. She hated Raghav. She would teach him a lesson. She imagined him bloating up and too fat to climb the stairs. After some time, calmer, she picked up a magazine and absently began turning its pages. From one of the pages she spied Princess Diana, smiling back at her. All of a sudden screams rent the air.

This was definitely Raghav. Mummy had gone to the market. Without waiting to think of her clothes, Neha ran out. At some distance she saw several boys fallen on top of someone. From the pair of thin flailing legs, Neha recognised them as Raghav's. As usual, he must have entered into a fight and now couldn't take the physical beating.

With one hand she pulled away the boy on top. Sensing something amiss, the other boys turned to look at her and then scared, they ran off.

Neha helped the badly bruised Raghav to stand up. There were tears streaming down his face and he was hiccuping. Still he brushed her helping hand off and marched home without a backward glance or a word of thanks.

At dinner that night, Raghav kept his eyes on his plate. He was oddly silent about his taunts regarding her obesity and what she ate. Only once he gave her a warning or was it a pleading look that she shouldn't tell mother and father that he had been in a fight today. Neha was in no mood to speak of anything that day so dinner passed

off peacefully.

Next day was school, as usual. During recess,
Neha ventured out for a glass of water. Three fifth standard boys stood joking. "There comes fatty", said one. Immediately from behind the bushes, a voice rang out, "The bold and the beautiful." Everyone turned to see who it was but the child had already run away. Only Neha recognised the voice.

It was undoubtedly Raghav.



DEAR CHILDREN AND YOUNG FRIENDS,

Do you like to draw, paint, write poems or to shape in wood, textiles or metal?

You now have the opportunity to use your art to tell about your family life. 1994 has been declared by the United Nations as the International Year of the Family. and so the International Museum of Children's Art in co-operation with UNESCO, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Norwegian Agency for Development Co-operation (NORAD) and other institutions are arranging a global art competition.

The Family Seen Through Children's Eyes

You can draw, sculpt and if you so wish, write also a poem or short text about your mother, father, grandmother, grandfather, brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles or other persons dear to you, who look after you and with

whom you form a family. Paint or write about life in your household or family; about things that help you live together in happiness or make life difficult for vou: about vour dreams for your own family in the future; about children with no family—how it feels when a parent dies or the household breaksup; about going someplace with your parents, or playing or working together; about storms, floods or other events that have marked your family life. The list of things to draw is endless-but you will know best what to choose!

Remember: what is most important for the competition is the quality of your art. Think about colours and composition, and do complete your work totally. Try to do your best, and even better! Special diplomas and prizes will be sent out for the best work.

Grown-ups often forget what it felt like to be child: what their thoughts were when they were children—their difficulties, desires, fears and dreams. Nobody can tell these things better than you. Paint what you feel most deeply, and you are free to let poems, short

CHILDREN'S WORLD APRIL 1993

texts, comments and letters accompany your artwork.

The prize-winning work will be exhibited in Oslo, Paris, New York, Vienna and other cities all over the world. Your pictures will mark the International Year of the Family and make people think about families or households, about trying to live together, about looking after and educating young children.

So, take your brush and paint! Show what you feel, think, fear and hope. Make your contribution to the International Year of the Family, and help make a better and happier life for families all over the world.

We wish you the best of luck with your work!

Rafael Goldin, Director, International Museum of Children's Art

Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Norwegian Agency for Development Co-operation (NORAD)

UNESCO, Young Child and the Family Environment Project All children and youth of all countries around the world (2-18 years)

Both group and individual works are accepted

All kinds of techniques and materials are permitted. Paint with oil, water or acrylic colour. draw. cut-and-paste in any format. Your work can be big or little. You decide! You can shape in wood, clay, textiles, metal and make sculpture and fig-

You can write poems and songs or find other ways of expressing yourself.

Anything goes!

Write on the back of each work, in capital letters:

- 1) The title of your work
- 2) Your name (all names if a group)
- 3) Nationality
- 4) The artist's age and date of birth
- 5) Address (both private and school)
- 6) Date/month/year when the work was finished

Send your work to.

The International Museum of Children's Art Lilles Froens vei 4 N-0369 OSLO NORWAY

(Telephone 47-2-468573 Telefax 47-2-692910)

When your work is complete, please mail it as soon as possible and not layer than 15 October 1993

Ask your parents or teachers for help to get the brushes, colour, paper and other material you may need and also for help with mailing the work

The received works will be kept as part of the collection of The International Museum of Children's Art. Oslo and will be used for different thematic exhibitions, publications, research, etc. Contributions cannot be returned, and are given to The International Museum of Children's Art with appurtenant rights.



Story: Homagni Chaudhuri Illustrations: B.G.Varma

NCE you reach this town of North Bengal, you will picnic in the adjacent Wild Life Sanctuary. All the visitors do. But you will do so at your own risk. As you approach the forest, the guard at the entrance stops you and says

The board at the side also says so, in three languages.

You enquired earlier and know that tigers and panthers avoid humans and do not appear on the road in the day time. You were hoping to see His Majesty, the tiger, but that will remain a distant dream as even the forest guards rarely sight the King. The elephants move

in a herd, and the old lady elephant, a great grand-mother, in charge of the herd, is very strict. The staff of the Sanctuary keep track of the herd but they like to keep the visitors away so that the elephants are not disturbed. You knew that you will see peacocks, monkeys, and may be hog deer and if lucky, a herd of Chital deer.

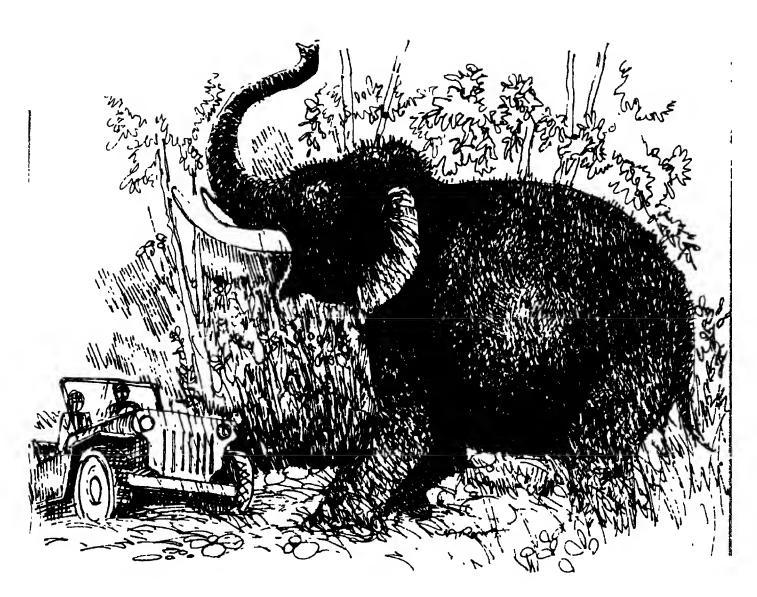
You also have been told about Kala, the old bull elephant. He is huge, over ten feet in height and judging from his immense bulk weighs at least four tons. Each of Kala's tusks is estimated at more than a hundred kilograms. If he is found standing on the road, you just have to wait, may be

half an hour or even an hour, until Kala gets the urge to move. The forest guards do not like him but in the Sanctuary, Kala is more important than the staff or the visitors. The tiger is the King, but Kala is the emperor and, except for the elephant herd, all have to bear with his moods.

You will enjoy your picnic. You will eat too much and if you have not heard of Kala's latest trick you will take a nap.
Though an elephant is not known to laugh, this trick, except for the victims, is very funny.

Kala thought of the trick the day, Ranjit, the forest ranger, was in a hurry and Samar was driving the jeep. Rounding a bend, Samar changed into high gear and then braked hard; Kala, the bull elephant, was on the road.

The noise of the jeep had rudely wakened Kala. Kala had eaten well but the breaking of so many juicy branches and then the chewing and chewing was tiring work. He was just beginning to enjoy an afternoon nap when horrible noises, that should not be part of the jungle sounds, burst over his very large ears. Kala



was angry, very angry!
He threw back his head,
lifted his trunk and
opened his mouth. All
tensed, waiting for the
thunder of Kala's angry
trumpeting. But there was
no sound.

Kala had recognised
Samar, the nasty man
who, on and off, made
these horrid sound. It was
no use trying to cause a
fright, Samar was ready
to face Kala's anger. It
was sad that Kala could
not beat up this small
creature. Kala was

taught by his mother and aunts that he was to be careful so as not to be declared a rogue and get shot. There was no peace. As it was, the old lady elephants were so fussy that he had left the herd to live his own life alone. But now this man went around the forest making terrible noises and reminding him of the horror stories his grandmother used to tell him. The stories were about evil men who captured elephants and made

them work at silly things like carrying humans. And many years ago, as a youngster in the herd, he had seen tired elephants pushing wagons. "Circus, a very bad thing", was grandmother's explanation. This man had no right to frighten him in the jungle. The man needed a lesson, he should be shocked out of his senses, but this was not the time.

Kala closed his mouth and moved away from the road. Ranjit was surprised and asked the equally surprised Samar, "What is the matter? Kala has not trumpeted. Has he become dumb?" Ranjit and Samar would know the answer but not now.

It was a week later that Samar was returning with the jeep from the town. He had finished his work early and was pleased to be back in the forest by the afternoon. As he drove past a glade, an open area in the forest, he saw a herd of chital. The deer looked alert and cheerful. They were nibbling at the grass and moving slowly. There was no work waiting for them. Samar envied their easy life and suddenly felt very tired. The previous night he had been almost without sleep. Ranjit, the forest ranger and forest guards with the help of Samar had chased a gang of timber thieves. The raiders were armed with modern rifles. The forest staff, with only one rifle and two shot guns but a strong sense of duty, won the fight and drove out the thieves. None of them were injured but blood stains showed that the raiders were not so lucky.

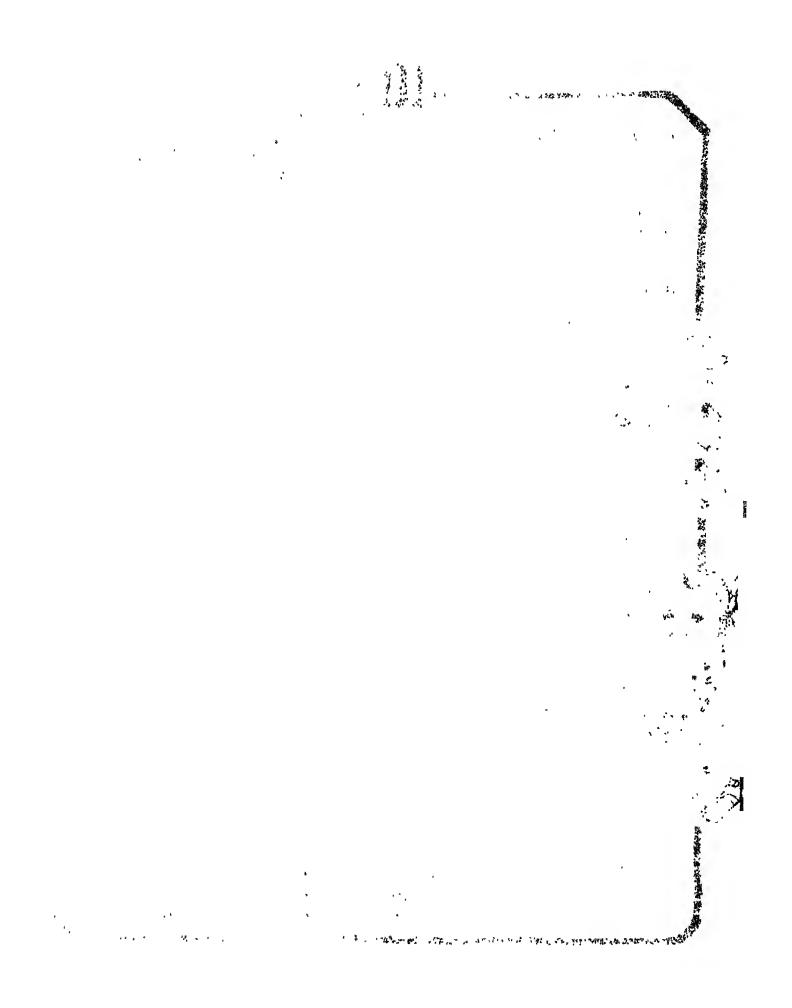
Samar knew that there

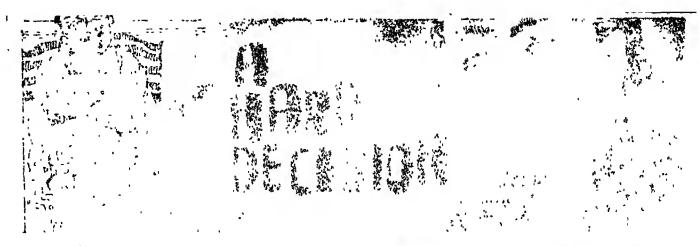


was time to spare. He parked his jeep in a corner and decided to take a few minutes off and have a small nap. He curled up inside the jeep but just as he felt comfortable and drowsy he was pushed down from the seat. Waking up, Samar saw Kala, the giant bull elephant, taking his trunk out of the jeep window. But Kala was not satisfied with a gentle push; he raised his trunk and TRUMPETED. The jeep shook and Samar was deaf for the rest of the day. Samar knew that he could do nothing in protest, not even complain to the

forest ranger. He was not injured and the forest was for Kala and not for him. He only hoped that Kala would now forgive him.

But sadly this is not the end of the story. Kala now finds the sight of the suddenly wakened person a great joy. Humans should not take naps and working for a good cause is its own reward, so thinks Kala. The staff know about Kala's trick, the forest guards remain alert and the poachers prefer to keep away. Kala of course, has his nap as and when he feels like it.





Story: Vernon Thomas

Illustration: Deepak Harichandan

the calendar. Five days to go before the great event—his tenth birthday. He had been planning to have a party. He had earned almost a hundred rupees to pay all the expenses. He had run errands for the neighbours, washed cars and taken on other odd jobs over the months for that reason.

After all, he could not depend on his mother.
Mrs. D'Souza was a widow, working in a dress-shop on a small salary, which went to keep Peter, his sister, Mary, and wee brother, Tony.

Peter had decided to buy a birthday cake, a bottle of orange squash, a few sweets and some biscuits for the occasion. Maybe, with a little luck, he could squeeze in the smallest box of bon-bons displayed in the confectioner's shop window. How he longed for a box of bon-bons! No birthday party was really complete without them.

He had invited his young friends from across the street, and given a special invitation to Mrs. Dias, the rich widow who did so much to help his family.

Everything was going fine. The only doubt was that Mrs. Dias was away visiting a sick friend. It was hardly likely that she would be back in time for his party. Though Peter sincerely hoped she would be able to attend.

With forty-eight hours to go before the great day, Peter went round to the confectioners. He priced all the goodies he wanted. He even asked the price of the smallest box of bon-bons available. This could be just about squeezed into his budget. He returned home very happy.

To his disappointment, he found his mother unwell and in bed. She had a fever, and was worse the next morning. Peter was alarmed.

"Shall I call the doctor, Mummy?" he asked anxiously.

"I have no spare money, darling!" answered his mother very truthfully. "Don't worry! I will be all right."

But Peter did worry.
He felt his mother needed
medicines and medical attention. He ran off to call
Dr. Lobo.

The good doctor was kind. He charged no fee for his visit. He only asked Peter to buy the medicines, which were quite costly.

Poor Peter was faced with a problem. Buying the medicines would mean spending the money he had saved for the party. In such a case, he would have to cancel his party.

Peter thought over the matter deeply. He decided his mother's life was more important than the

party. So he bought the medicines, and sorrowfully cancelled his party.

Mrs. D'Souza was much better on her son's birthday. She blessed him, and thanked him for his kindness. Peter was pleased that she was almost well. He was sad only because his birthday seemed so uneventful.

As the hours slipped by he grew more and more sad. By evening he could hardly keep back the tears. He sobbed silently as the clock on the shelf struck six. Then, at that moment, there was a knock on the front door. He hurried to answer it, hastily drying his eyes.

To his great surprise, on the door step stood all his young friends, each carrying a parcel of goodies. Bringing up the rear was Mrs. Dias. She was quite weighed down with an enormous birthday cake in one hand while, in the other, she carried the largest box of bon-bons Peter had ever seen.

Of course, it turned out a wonderful party. The table quite groaned under the weight of the goodies. There were cakes, sweets, biscuits, chocolates and gallons of orange squash.

Peter was deeply moved when he read what was written on the birthday cake. It said:

And how it all happened was, because Mrs. Dias had returned just that afternoon, in time to hear the story from one of Peter's friends — in time, also, to reward Peter with a birthday party, the likes of which he had never dreamed of.

INSTRUCTIONS

With a pencil, start at the arrow and draw a line through the maze to the without crossing any lines. It was a fiery dream
Or you can call it sinister
In this dream I saw myself
as a newly elected minister.

I was covered with a garland for I had won the election I was chosen Prime Minister because of my political perfection.

I was now in Red Fort addressing my dear subjects dreaming of going into the 21st century and curing all the defects.

Just then, a frightful thing happened that disturbed my speech suddenly, it was my opponent, who envied me he took the stage and spoke fluently.

He said that I had cheated and accused me of immoral acts Now I was so startled that I neglected the true facts.

I forgot that it was a public meeting and I should not become so angry but I fought with him on the stage in front of the whole gentry.

Soon, we fought fiercely there and in reality, I was fighting with myquilt when I realised the situation I was overcome with guilt.

I was lying on the floor my room looked a mess just then my daddy entered and you can imagine my distress!

Mahima Gupta (14)

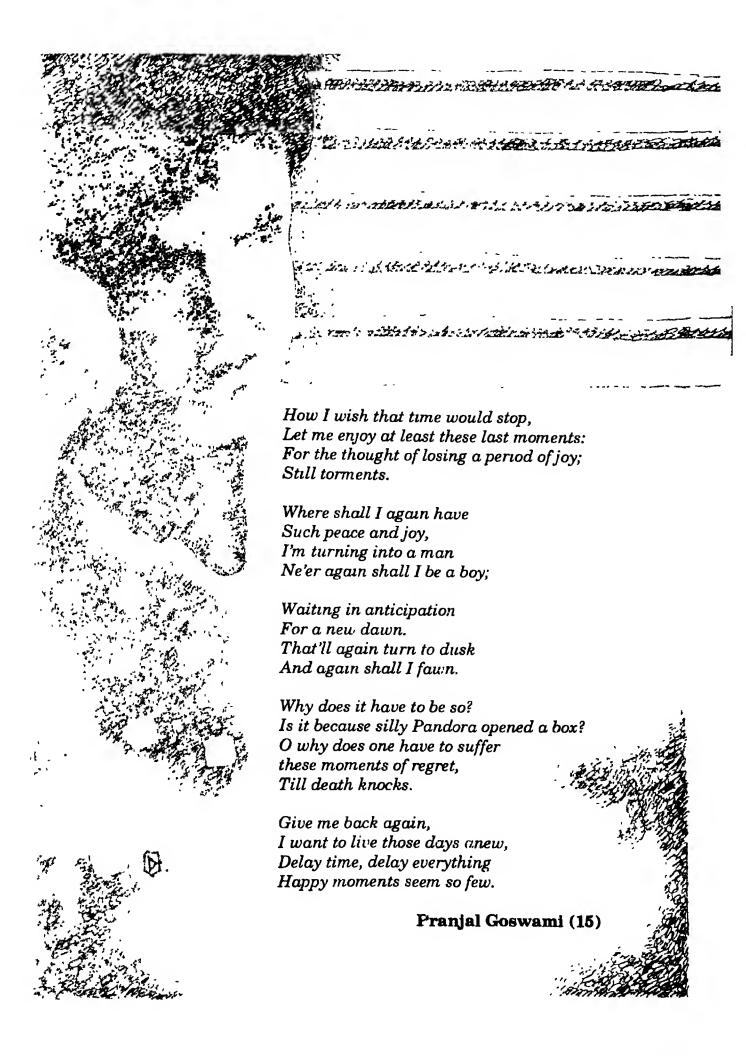
NOSTALGIA

Those lively days are lost
Those happy free days of the past,
Never, never to return
I enjoyed those days to the very last.

I leave behind my childhood; Those days of innocence and bliss, With regret and sadness The unfathomable peace, I will miss.

As time passes, I watch helplessly, A new dawn is approaching; I know not what it has In store for me.

I do not want to leave those Childhood moments of pleasure, Oh! How could time pass so fast, So much faster than I could measure.





of her. A strong wind blew the nest off the perch. It fell to the ground once again. I climbed down and saw the baby squirrel was still in it. She held the edge of the nest and looked at me as if she was pleading that I save her.

The last bell rang. My cousin Sonu grabbed my bag alongwith his and ran. "Let's occupy the front seat of the bus," he said.

Clutching the squirrel's nest I climbed into the bus. When we reached home. Sonu announced the arrival of the baby squirrel, who in any case was squeaking constantly. Ma was very displeased at first but soon accepted the new guest. With a dropper she fed the baby squirrel some milk. After her feed the baby squirrel slept in the nest. My sister Renu lined an old shoe-box with rags and I kept the nest in that. My mother took care of the squirrel when we were in school and we named her Sweety.

One day Ma asked me to take Sweety back to the mango tree to her mother. I took her to the tree and waited the whole day for the mother squirrel to arrive. The mother

squirrel never came. At last Sonu and I decided to bring Sweety back home.

In a few months, Sweety had grown into a beautiful full-grown palm squirrel. Sweety had her nest between the folds of a curtain. She was a regular thief. Whenever something was missing, it was found in her nest. She was particularly fond of wool, cotton, paper-cuttings and dried grass. Now she was eating chapatis, fruit, cooked and uncooked vegetables. She was very fond of peanuts. It was such a comic sight when she would sit on her haunches and raise a bit of guava to her mouth it lik us.

One day Dadi ji arrived. We all touched her feet. As she was blessing us, "OOOOPS!" she cried out. Sweety had jumped on her shoulder.

We giggled, but Ma gave us a dirty look and shouted at Sweety, "Go Sweety," and Sweety ran to her nest, peeping out to see what was going on.

In the night, when Sonu, Renu and I sat with Dadi ji, she narrated a story about palm squirrels. The story goes like this.

"Long long ago when

Rama and Sita were to

stay in a jungle and Sita

haunches and raise a bit of guava to her mouth with her forepaws and eat it lik us.

was kidnapped by King Ravan, the animals told Rama about Sita's kidnapping. Rama set out to bring Sita back. The animals of the forest offered help to Rama. Rama had to construct a bridge to cross the sea to

reach Lanka. All the animals including squirrels helped to construct the bridge, When Rama was ready to cross over, all the animals came to see him off. Rama blessed the animals one by one. When the squirrel came to greet him, Ram stroked it fondly and three white stripes appeared on its back. Ever since, palm squirrels have white stripes on their back."

We were thrilled to hear this story. Next morning we checked the white stripes on Sweety's back.

Sweety was spotlessly clean. She liked to chirp noisily to attract our attention. Often her chirping resembled the note of a bird. When she was afraid she would cry repeatedly in a shrill and loud tone.

Dadi ji was a religious lady. Before starting her meal she took out bits of food from all dishes for birds and animals. Sweety was always there to have her share.

Sweety was curious about new objects. As soon as she saw something new she would stare at it for a moment, then jump over it.

One morning, very quietly and carefully l carried Sweety to school. I



just wanted to show her to my friends. Sonu knew about this. I had kept Sweety in my school bag. While travelling in the bus I felt Sweety several times. As soon as I touched her she would nip my finger to say that she was safe. As soon as I reached the classroom and opened my bag, Sweety charged out. All my classmates tried to touch her. And Sweety jumped from shoulder to shoulder. She was in a playful mood. When the game of hide-and-seek was at its height Ms. Singh, our teacher entered the classroom.

"Good morning, children," said she.

"Good morning, we replied in a chorus.

Suddenly a boy giggled. My eyes were fixed on Sweety who was perched on the upper edge of the blackboard. She was staring at Ms. Singh. The boy giggled again.

"What?....." began Ms. Singh but before she uttered another word, Sweety jumped and landed on her hair-bun with a garland entwined round it.

"Ooooooops....." cried Ms. Singh and I missed a heart beat. Sweety got scared. She sprang from shoulder to shoulder and landed right in front of Sonu, my cousin. Sonu picked her up.

"Is it your squirrel? Ms. Singh asked him.

Sonu kept quiet.

"Is it yours?" she asked again.

In the meantime, Sweety walked to his other shoulder.

"Go out of the class with your squirrel."

Sonu picked Sweety up and walked out of the class.

I felt sorry for Sonu and he did not talk to me the whole day.

Sweety was fearless.
She was very friendly
with our dog Rini. She
enjoyed taking a ride on
Rini's back. Whenever
Rini was not in a playful

mood she would shake herself and next moment Sweety would jump and hide herself in her nest.

One day, Sonu, my sister Renu and I went into the garden with Sweety. She was on my shoulder. All of a sudden a stray cat padded out from behind a guava tree. Sweety looked at her. She made a friendly chirpy cry to say hello and before we could say or do anything. Sweety slipped off my shoulder. The cat pounced on her and instantly caught Sweety by the neck. Sonu shouted, I velled and my sister Renu screamed. All of us picked up stones and threw them at the cat but our stones fell short of the

distance.

Ignoring the shouts and stones, the cat disappeared with Sweety in its mouth.

Dadiji and Ma came out of the house, hearing our cries. We all looked around and searched for Sweety but could not find her.

In the evening as we sat to have dinner, Renu, my sister burst into tears, I miss Sweety."

"My child, Sweety was a tame squirrel. You all protected her. She never learnt to protect herself. Had she lived independently she would have learnt to protect herself. She trusted everyone."

Though Dadiji was right I still miss Sweety.



Because people do not care
They spit, throw peels and dirt
Everyone's health is hurt
We should keep our surroundings clean
Then disease nowhere will be seen.

Rachit Khosla (7)

HAPPINESS THE PACEMAKER

The pacemaker of one's life is 'Happiness', As it takes away from an individual all his gloominess,

Happiness can be called the ultimate choice

It also fills ones path with thrill and noise!

Yet there are infinite tears and wails, Oh! there is no end to all these pains, But yes, now I can see my star shining, Because my life is once again bordered with a golden lining.

I am surely better than those on the streets, They get no opportunity when life's happiness they can greet,

All their time is spent in making both ends meet,

And look at my life it is as plain and smooth as a sheet.

They cut the grass, pick up bits of paper We are the one's who are their real makers,

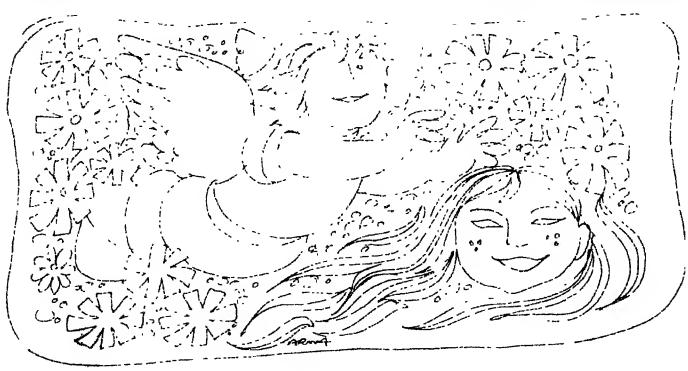
Don't they require happiness like us? Then while giving alms why do we make a fuss?

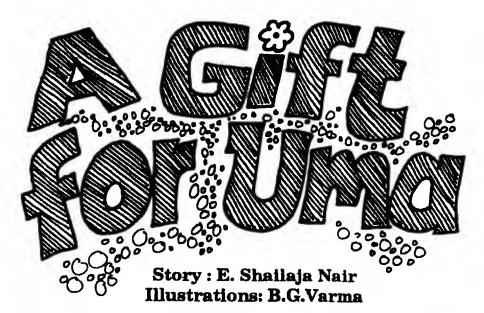
I feel I am lucky to be what I am today, Pain and poverty are not the one's my life has to obey,

My life is as free as a bird out of a cage, But theirs is a train always pushing on the gauge.

Yes! happiness is my life's pacemaker, It is my wish to be these peoples pain taker!

> Shveta Sahal Illustrations : B.G.Varma





ND they all went into the garden to play," said

Mummy, closing the book of bedtime stories. "Now

of bedtime stories. "Now both of you go to sleep. Remember you have to get up early for school tomorrow. Goodnight." She kissed the ten-year-old twins, Reena and Ritu, and put off the light.

The next morning was all hustle and bustle as usual. There was the early morning rush for the bathroom, the usual search for missing socks, hankies and books with the accompanying shouts for Mummy and Mummy's replies shouted back from the kitchen where she was cooking breakfast and packing the twins' tiffin boxes. Then followed the 100-metre dash to the bus-stop which would have broken any record.

School was the best

part of the twins' lives. They loved the daily grumbling over half-done homework, the fun on the sports field, the jokes played on the unsuspecting new Hindi teacher and the terror that the science teacher was capable of arousing in the girls.

In the afternoon as they were walking back home from the bus-stop they met Lata, their maid. She was carrying a large bag of fruit and vegetables in one hand while in the other she carried a packet of medicines. She was finding it difficult to walk with the heavy bag and the packet.

"Hello, Lata, let us help you carry the bag," said Reena, taking the bag from Lata's hand.

"Why are you alone today? Where is Uma?" asked Ritu. "And for whom are you taking these medicines? Who is ill?"

"What a lot of questions you ask, Ritu Mol (daughter)," replied Lata. "Let me answer these before you come up with the next lot of questions. First, I am alone because Uma is not well. Second, Uma is at home. Third, these medicines are for Uma. Fourth, Uma has broken her leg."

"But how did she break her leg?" Ritu asked.

"She was returning after working at your house yesterday when a car knocked her down. The driver was driving very fast and when a dog came across his path he simply swerved and went on to the kerb, knocking down Uma. He didn't even have the decency to stop. And now my Uma is confined to bed with a plaster on her leg. Her left thigh as well as her leg have been fractured so she has been asked not to leave her bed for six weeks." Lata said.

Reena and Ritu were silent. They did not know what to say. They know that Lata and Uma lived on the money they made from working at different houses.

Uma's father had died when she was a baby and



her mother was too poor to send Uma to school. Uma loved to read and the twins had taught her the alphabet in their spare time. They used to lend her books as well and she would feed on it voraciously. They were sorry to hear that she had met with such an accident.

"Why are you two late today?" asked Mummy as the twins opened the gate into their courtyard.

"We met Lata and helped her carry some things home," said Reena. Soon the whole story came pouring out.

"Well, now hurry up and change your uniforms and come for lunch," said Mummy, going into the dining-room.

After lunch the twins were relaxing in their room when Ritu again spoke about Uma. "I wish we could do something to cheer her up," she said.

"I wish we could too. But what can we do?" Reena replied. But Ritu had no idea.

That evening they were going for a Vishu celebration at the club. The twins were excited for there would be a fair with stalls selling eats and toys as well as a giantwheel and a merrygo-round. Daddy had said he would meet them at

the club itself as he had some last-minute work at the office. So Mummy and the twins went off in an autorickshaw. Vishu, the harvest festival in spring, was the twins' favourite festival. The whole of Kerala celebrated the festival which fell on April 14. The fair was all that the twins had expected it to be. They met many of their school friends as well, as it was the biggest fair for Vishu in Trivandrum. Having eaten their fill and tried out all the rides the twins and their friends, Anita and Priya, sat down on some chairs strewn all over the garden of the club. The twins told their friends too about Uma's accident and how they wanted to do something for her but did not know what to do.

"Why don't you send her a surprise gift or something?" Anita suggested.

"I know what we will do," Ritu said excitedly. Turning to Reena she said, "You remember the story that Mummy read out to us the other night? About those two boys who placed a Christmas tree outside the window of their friend as a surprise for Christmas morning? Well, why don't we collect some gifts for Uma and pack them up and leave them outside their house? We will not put our names and she will think that some fairy has sent them to her."

"Yes, I think that is a good idea," said Reena after considering it a while.

"Oh, let us too join in your surprise," begged Anita and Priya. The twins agreed and they decided to go to the market the next day to buy their gifts.

"I have Rs. 20 left of my pocket money," said Reena.

"I have Rs. 10," said Anıta.

"So do I," said Priya.

"I have Rs. 30 from my birthday money. I will contribute that," said Ritu.

"Well, we will buy a nice book as we know how much Uma loves to read. That will cost about Rs. 50. What shall we buy with the rest?" asked Reena.

"Let us buy a set of colour pencils," suggested Priya.

"That will only cost about Rs 10. We will still have Rs. 20 left."

"I know. Let us give

that money to her in cash. After all on Vishu we all get money from our fathers as Vishukaineetam," said Anita.

"That is an excellent idea," replied all the rest. So it was decided to give Uma a book, a box of colouring pencils and some money.

The next day the four had a lovely time shopping. They got both the gifts and found that they had even more money left over as everywhere there were sales for Vishu. So they bought a nice little purse as well to put the money in. Then armed with a roll of wrapping paper they returned home.

They settled down in the twins," room to pack up the present. Anita who was a neat packer was asked to wrap up all the gifts. Meanwhile Ritu, who was good at drawing, made a pretty little card. Reena wrote Happy Vishu in it.

The children could hardly wait for April 14 to arrive. They kept ticking off the days on the calendar though there were only three days left.

At last Vishu dawned. Early in the morning before daybreak their mother woke up the twins

and they walked with their eyes tightly shut to the *puja* room where Vishukani had been arranged. When they opened their eyes, they were dazzled by the bright light of the brass oil lamp which was reflected in the little mirror placed at the foot of the idol of Vishnu. Beneath was arranged a variety of fruits and vegetables and a little grain in each half of a coconut. Their mother's gold jewellery had been arranged around the lamp while on betel leaves rested their Vishukaineetam along with an areca nut each.

The twins and their mother sang some songs which are traditionally sung on Vishu and then their father handed them the Vishukaineetam. Then they ran off to have their bath and wear the new dresses that Mummy had bought for them.

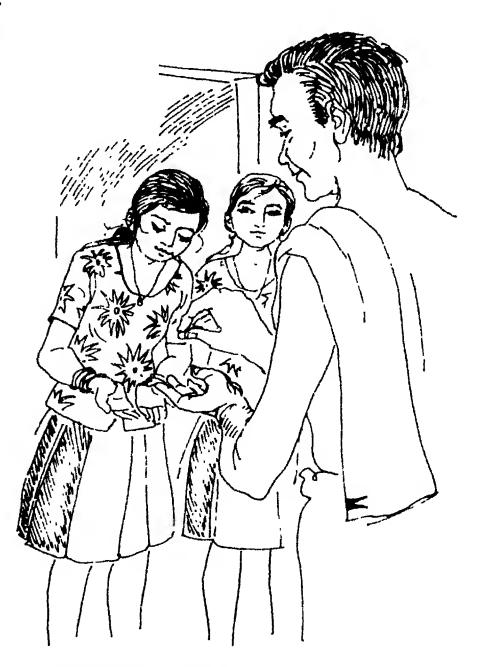
Once they were dressed, the twins sneaked out of their house silently, the precious packages for Uma grasped in their hands. They tiptoed to the door of the small house where Uma and her mother lived. They left the packages on the doorstep and after banging loudly on

the door ran away. They hid behind a bamboo cluster waiting to see what would happen.

Soon Lata opened the door and peered out into the brightening morning. A look of puzzlement passed over her face when she found nobody. Then her eyes fell on the pack-

ages at her feet. With a loud exclamation she picked them up took them inside.

As soon as Lata went inside the twins left their hiding place and went to the window and peeped in. They saw Lata placing the packages on Uma's bed and both of



them wondering where they could have come from. Then Uma picked up the card and opened it, her face became transformed as she read what was written inside.

"See, Amma, somebody has sent these gifts to me for Vishu. Who do you think it could be?" she asked.

"I don't know *Mol* (daughter). Isn't there any name?"

"No, Amma, there isn't,"
Uma replied looking at
the packages. "But they
are meant for me as my
name is written on them."

Uma unwrapped the packages exclaiming in happiness as each gift was exposed. The watching twins were thrilled to see Uma's happiness. They crept away silently and ran back home.

Breakfast was being brought to the table as the twins entered the diningroom.

"Where have you been?" asked Mummy. The twins grinned at each other and then replied in unison, "Nowhere," their secret was only theirs, not to be shared with anyone.



They ask you how emotion emerges in a poem?

Peep into a poet's heart,
You shall find immortal sorrow.
They ask why does one cry?
Peep into that tattered life,
You shall find tears compelling melody.
They ask how tragedies are planned?
Explore into those sad eyes,
You shall find crumpled dreams.
They ask what poverty is?
Look at those hungry stares and thirsty
throats,

You shall find a miserable world existing there,

They ask you what terrorism is,
Look through the torn veil of a widow
You shall find life itself is fear.
Some people ask, who they are?
Peep through the misty curtains of lust
into your soul.

You shall find yourself a shrinking human Merely flesh, blood and bones.

Monica Sehgal (14)



Dear Bruises and Bumps and Bandages,

I don't know about you but whenever I fall down I get a really nasty bruise. My knees are scarred with cuts and scratches and gashes that have healed and left marks forever. In fact my knees are probably mini-versions of Kuruskshetra and Plassey and Srirangapatnam.

I was discussing this with Raghu the other day and he was very scornful. "Pooh," he said, with an airy wave of his hand. "Pooh, your knees are like an ironed table cloth compared to mine. Your knees are like the floor of a new house, they are like white butter. You should see my knees. My knees are wounded, deeply scarred. My knees have seen real wars."

Now I wasn't going to let Raghu get away with all this. What rubbish! Ironed tablecloth indeed! So I rolled up my pants to the knees and I showed the long two-inch scar I got when I fell off a tree and the deep mark of my cycle spoke and the wound I got when I...

"Pooh!" said Raghu.
"These are nothing but scratches, mere grazes.
Now my knees have known history. They have

gone through real pain, real bloodshed. They have known what agony is, what suffering is. The suffering of the soul!"

"Pooh! Pooh!" I said, "what has the soul to do with your knees?"

He gave me a strange look. "I am speaking of the S-O-L-E. What has a soldier like me to do with namby-pamby things like a S-O-U-L? Only you pink blooded people talk about souls! We men talk of conflict and war and victory!"

And with that, he walked off, as he always does just when I have a really cutting remark to make. The remark I was about to make was, 'What does S-O-L-E have to do with your knees?'

Of course I didn't make ot which was probably for the better because later I thought of it and he might have said. "It's the sole reason for my knees."
Then where would I have been?

Anyway, I also realised, later, much later of course that for all his talking, Raghu had not shown me the battle scars on his own knees.

Next morning, I was late for school and nearly left without having breakfast. But when I reached



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the gates, I found I wasn't the only one who was late. There was a big crowd of boys just inside the school compound, a big crowd of excited boys. They seemed to be looking at something on the ground. Some of them were saying, 'Let me help him.' Others were clicking their tongues and saying, 'Poor chap' and still others were asking each other, 'How did it happen?'

The school bell rang with a clang and the boys, most of them, scattered in a hundred directions. A figure rose from the ground helped with great tenderness by two or three of those who had staved behind. But what a curious figure! It was totally covered with bandages. There was a bandage, badly tied like a turban around the head, another one across the arm and a couple down one leg. There was also a band of sticking plaster across one cheek and strangely enough, over the left eyebrow. Between the bandaged cheek and eyebrow, were Raghu's eyes looking at me with an expression of defiance.

"Raghu!" I cried in astonishment. "What on earth has happened. Just yesterday you were fine and now..." "How long does it take to fall off a tree?" asked one of Raghu's supporters. "A year?"

"But... but..." I stammered, "which tree?"

"A tall one," said the same chap. He made me feel like a fool and an unkind, unhelpful fool at that. "Now will you please make way for poor Raghu instead of standing there asking all kinds of stupid questions?"

I stepped back. Raghu moved forward like a film hero in the last but one reel. He staggered, he limped, he grimaced. And all the time his supporters made supporting noises. 'Careful.' 'Oops, Did that

hurt?' 'Poor chap.' As Raghu passed me, I heard him hiss, "Second World War."

Well, it turned out to be a war for me all right. I was late and I had not fallen off a tree so there was no excuse. Everybody in the class, even the geography teacher, was most concerned about Raghu. The class room began to resemble a sick ward. Raghu was given two chairs so that he could keep his leg stretched out. Somebody even translated what the teacher was saying.

I alone stayed out of it. I was suspicious. I didn't think Raghu was injured



at all. But do you think I could have said anything of the sort? I would have been murdered.

So I kept quiet. But everyone else said I was jealous. Some of them even told me to jump into a lake. "Poor Raghu," they said. "He's being so brave about it. And you don't even care."

It was a terrible first period. Then, suddenly, at the end of it, Mr.Krish appeared. He asked for Raghu, took a good look at him, and asked him to wait for him in the office, For some reason, my heart lifted. There was something about Mr.Krish, something like a laugh in his voice.

Raghu did not return to the class that day. The school peon came and took his bag and books and wouldn't answer any of our questions. After school, I rushed off to see Raghu. There was a crowd of boys at Raghu's gate already but they were all sent away. And wonder of wonders, I was allowed in.

"You can come in, Perky," said Raghu's mother. "Come in and try and drive some sense into your friend's head."

'His injured head?' I wondered. But when I went in Raghu was without bandages altogether.

He was sitting on his bed, glum, sulky, like a hedgehog with thorn fever. He didn't even say hello to me. All around him, in the bed, on his desk and on the floor were all his sports things—cricket bats, badminton rackets, footballs, a net, a basketball ring, a carrom board. I looked at everything and couldn't imagine what all of this was doing on the floor.

"I have to give it all away," said Raghu in a hollow voice. "That's my punishment for pretending."

"But why did you have to pretend?" I asked. "Why?"

"Because I wanted to be a hero," he answered, still using his hollow voice. "I got the idea from you. Actually you are to blame!"

"Me?" I squeaked.
"How?"

"Your knees!" he said.
"Look at how many marks you've got on your knees.
It's not fair. I have very few. So I decided I'd make up injuries."

"What did Mr.Krish say?" I asked.

"He found out. He told me straightaway that I'd better leave before my friends find out. I don't know why my mother let you in." "Well, I'm not going to say anything to anybody. But what will you do tomorrow when you go to school without any bandages?"

"I don't care," he shouted. "Suddenly I don't care. I have to give away everything I love. What do I care now! I don't care at all."

Raghu got up abruptly and began to move to-wards his desk. He tripped over a cricket bat, fell heavily over the carrom board and brought down a pile of rackets, balls, the basketball ring, a hockey stick all of which rained heavily and steadily on him!

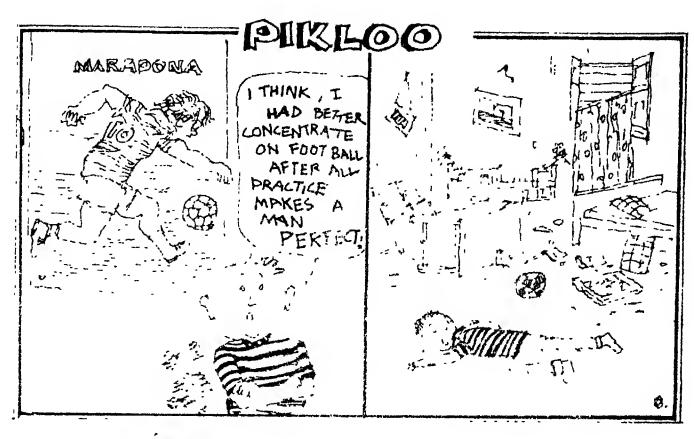
I've always known, haven't you, that Raghu is the luckiest chap in the world?

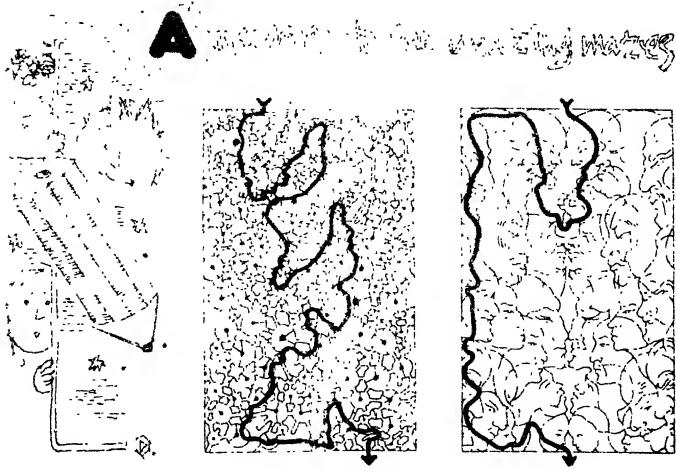
Yours weak in the knees,

Perky

PS. Another thing! If any of you want to inquire after Raghu's health, please write to the Editor. I'm not talking to Raghu. Just because he needed a couple of stitches over his left eyebrow doesn't mean that he can say damaging things about my poor knees.

PPS. He called them floor mops!





WHY SHOULD I BE SAD?

The world is full of sorrow, Perfect joy no one ever had. Everybody has some pain, Then why should I be sad?

Everyone lacks something, Everyone is tear clad, But still they try to smile, Then why should I be sad?

I may lack something, But I have other pleasures, Then why am I not satisfied, Why can't I curb my desires?

Of all, I have the best, I have everything but few, Now, I decide to shun my sadness, And begin life anew.



Vaishali Sinha (14)



CURFEW

Sleep is away
Repose out of the way
Just tension, fear and anxiety
In our hearts
Pelting, commotion, killing is in full
swing.
And then in curfew, even the birds don't
sing.
Tinkling of the temple bells we can no
more hear.

Wailing of the siren we can no more bear,
And what causes the most disgust,
Are those forced fasts
Every one is fed up
No one wants this to keep up
But still the killing goes on
By some unknown people.
Anubhuti Singh

TREASURE BOX PART IX

Story: Sarojini Sinha Illustrations: R. Ashish Bagchi

The story so far...

It is April 1857. Govind is helping his vaidya father. Ayodhya Prasad, to make medicines. Govind is 14 years old and married. His younger sister, Champa, is to leave shortly for her husband's house in Meerut. Govind's mother asks him to put up a swing for Champa on the neem tree. Doing so, Govind recalls how as a child he would use the hollow in the tree to hide his goodies, so that it came to be called his 'treasure box'.

That night, a visitor, Chintamani, a sepoy in the British army, brings news of Mangal Pandey. A fellow soldier, he had rebelled against the use of cartridges greased with cow or pig fat. Other soldiers followed suit. Pandey and his companions were hanged. An uprising was expected. Chintamani requests support. Ayodhya Prasad agrees.

Accompanying Champa to Meerut, Govind befriends soldiers Shyam Singh and Abdul Fazal Khan. The uprising has spread to Meerut.

Away in Aligarh, Ayodhya Prasad writes to Govind urging him to leave with the family for Bulandshahr where his uncle, Ganga Prasad, lives. However, the latter himself arrives But Govind, too ill to be moved, has to be left behind in the care of Bhola, his servant. He promises to join them later.

Upon recovering, Govind is reluctant to leave Delhi where all the action is. When Chintamani informs Govind of the progress of the uprising he is inspired to join the army. His friend, Abdul, takes him to his patron, Mirza Yunus Khan, who agrees to let Govind train with his soldiers.

Meanwhile, Mirza Sahib is being defamed. To clear his name, Abdul and Govind offer to go to the firangi camp to meet Mirza's spy, Anant Ram, and get information of military significance that can be passed on. Abdul is taken prisoner So, Govind and Bhola meet Anant Ram. They rescue Abdul, too. Anant Ram's news is then conveyed to the Emperor and acted upon but without success.

The British take Delhi and people start fleeing the city. Govind and Bhola too prepare to leave but change their minds at the last moment.

Peace returns to Delhi although the fight for independence continues. Ayodhya Prasad passes away but in a letter reveals that he has left some money in the 'treasure box'. But in order to retrieve it Govind has to shake off his father's 'friend' Kesar Das, who has his eye on the money too.

Now read on.

OVIND still could not stomach the idea of foreigners ruling the country. But he had seen enough of the horrors of war and was glad that peace had returned to the land. The fight for independence had to go on, but Govind wished someone, somehow could find a way of winning freedom without bloodshed.

Now he had to turn his mind to family affairs.
The house was in a bad state of disrepair and they had no money. His father had left home nearly eight months ago and not yet returned, while others, who had gone to take part in the freedom fight, were quietly trickling back to the capital.

Kuber Chand, the shopkeeper, had returned from the Ridge, richer than ever. He offered Govind a job, which he turned down with contempt. For daily needs, kukmini was selling her jewels or pawning them bit by bit.

From Meerut, Govind's brother-in-law, Kedar Nath, sent five mohurs through a trusted servant. He was grateful for help, but was not quite happy about it. For Kedar Nath, like Kuber Chand had

prospered by selling goods to the foreigners.

Govind thought of his father's profession. He had helped Ayodhya Prasad in grinding and mixing medicines and ointments. He had learnt enough from him and knew he could treat ailments which were not too complicated. So, when people came asking for their father, he did not turn them away, but treated them as best he could. Many of his patients were cured and they recommended him to others.

This way Govind earned a little money and managed to make ends meet. But he knew he could not earn much till he was a properly trained vaidya. So he approached the famous Gokul Das, who was his father's guru. Old Gokul Das accepted Govind as an apprentice and even agreed to pay him a small sum of money for the work he did.

Govind worked hard for Gokul Das during the day and helped Jagannath and Bhola in the evenings to repair the broken doors and windows of the house. By night he was quite exhausted.

Winter passed and it

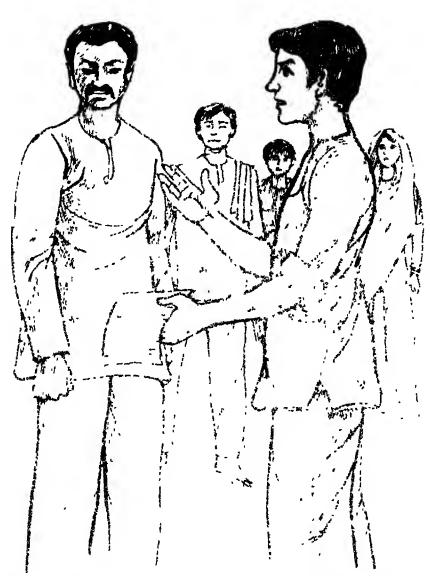
was summer again.
Ayodhya Prasad had still
not returned, nor was
there any news from him.
They were very worried,
but consoled themselves
with the thought that,
since the struggle for
freedom was still going on
in Jhansi, he might be
there.

So there was great excitement one evening when a man came with a letter from Ayodhya Prasad. It had a Jhansi address and after the usual greetings and good wishes, it said:

'After Kanpur fell to the British, I came to Jhansi. It'll be a long and tough fight and I have a feeling that I'll never return home. So Govind, my beloved son, I want you to take care of your younger brothers and sisters. See that your brothers grow up to be brave and patriotic. Arrange the marriages of your sisters to suitable boys, so that they are happy.

"Take particular care of your mother. She is a noble soul.

I'm sorry I haven't provided enough for the family. Before leaving for Aligarh I was sure that war was about to break out. So I tried to do whatever I could for the family's



future. I had saved five hundred mohurs and I've hidden these in the little 'treasure box'. Use the money wisely.

'Farewell, my son. May God take care of your mother, you and the others. My blessings.

Your Father, Ayodhya Prasad.'

Govind folded the letter and asked the man who brought it, "Sir, may I know who you are and where my father is at present?"

"My name's Kesar
Dev," replied the stranger,
avoiding Govind's eyes.
Then he blurted out,
"Your father died fighting
the angrez. He was with
the forces of the Rani of
Jhansi."

The news plunged the family into grief. Rukmini and the girls began sobbing. The neighbours came in to console and condole. The death cere-

monies were held in a fitting manner.

Govind could not spend much money. The neighbours who were themselves hard up, understood.

But Kesar Dev was not too happy. "Excuse me for interfering, Govind," he said. "Your father was my friend and I had great regard for him, I feel you should have performed your father's last rites in a better way than you did."

Though the man claimed to be his father's close friend and confidant, Govind did not like him, nor did he trust him. There was something cunning and crafty about his behaviour.

"We haven't the money, Kesar Devji," he told him. "Our house was looted by soldiers and we lost everything."

"Why don't you take the *mohurs* from the treasure box?" he countered.

Govind was extremely puzzled. He alone had read the letter and locked it carefully in his medicine chest. Though he had told everyone in the family what his father had written, he had not mentioned the mohurs and the treasure box. How

did Kesar Dev know of them, he wondered.

He decided to take the bull by the horns. "How did you know of the mohurs?"

Kesar Dev realised he had been caught on the wrong foot. Trying to make the best of a bad job, he stuttered and stammered, "Your father trusted me. He told me he had hidden a hundred mohurs in the treasure box for the family's use."

Govind was not to be taken in so easily. "But you clever man," he said to himself, "he didn't trust you enough to tell you where the treasure box was."

His little brother, sixyear-old Gopal, was quick to correct him "Bhaiya, the treasure box couldn't have been......"

Govind got up so suddenly that he almost knocked the child down and he started crying. Govind picked him up and took him outside.

"Gopal," he admonished. "You must never tell anyone where the treasure box is. It's a family secret."

Gopal nodded sobbing, but Govind knew he was too young to keep a secret. If Kesar Dev tried, he could get the



information from Gopal or Munna, who was even younger, being only four years old.

As a precaution Govind told everyone to keep the location of the treasure box a secret. He also asked Jagannath and Bhola to keep a watch on Kesar Dev's movements.

How Govind wished Kesar Dev would leave. They could then take the mohurs out. They were really hard up and the money would come in handy.

Nevertheless, they all treated Kesar Dev cordially and looked after him as well as they could. The man, on his part, tried to be friendly with everyone. He played with

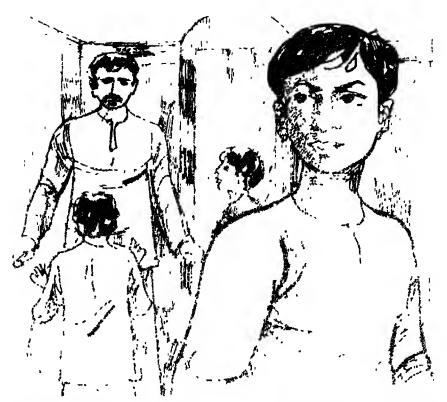
the children, talked to them and told them interesting stories. He did not seem to have anything else to do.

One day, Govind felt unwell and returned earlier than usual from Gokul Das's place. He found Kesar Dev in the room upstairs, tapping the walls with a small hammer. Gopal and Munna stood by, watching him with amusement.

"What're you doing, Kesar Devji?" Govind asked rather curtly.

Though taken aback Kesar Dev was cool enough to reply, "I'm looking for the treasure box."

The children giggled, "Shall I tell him, Govind



bhaiya, shall I tell him?" asked Munna, wanting to be helpful.

With a warning look at Munna, Govind told Kesar Dev, "Don't bother about the treasure box and mohurs. They've gone and there's no point worrying about them."

"Your father was a great friend of mine," Kesar Dev explained. "My only desire is to be of help to you."

Why was Kesar Dev so interested in the treasure box and the mohurs, Govind asked himself again and again. He was in two minds. Was their guest trying to steal the box or was he being unnecessarily suspicious of his father's friend?

In spite of the nagging doubt, Govind was determined not to give away the secret. But he knew that, sooner or later, Kesar Dev would worm it out of either Gopal or Munna. In the circumstances it was best to hand the mohurs over to Gokul Das for safe custody.

Govind decided to take them out of the treasure box. But Kesar Dev was shrewd enough to stick to him like a leech. He never left him alone. Even at night he slept next to him. If Govind got up, he would get up too.

Govind was so troubled he told Bhola again, "Look I spoke to you about Kesar Dev earlier, but I'm telling you again. Please keep an eye on him when I'm not here."

Bhola nodded absentmindedly. He was the only
servant they had now, because they had could not
afford to engage anyone
else. He was busy the
whole day. Early in the
morning he climbed the
neem tree to pluck twigs
for everyone to brush their
teeth with. Then he drew
water from the well, swept
the house and helped
Rukmini with the cooking
and shopping.

Late one night Govind found him repairing the wall of the well. "Why do you work so hard, Bhola? At this rate, you'll fail ill".

But Rukmini was annoyed with Bhola, inspite of all the hard work he put in. "Bhola may work hard," she complained sniffing. "But he's dishonest and a cheat."

"Bhola, a cheat? It can't be *Amma*," Govind protested.

"That's what you think! Bhola does the shopping and overcharges me for everything. He even stole the paise I had saved in the earthen pot on the kitchen shelf!"

She turned to Bhola and demanded, "What did you do with money?" "Nothing," Bhola mumbled.

"You eat what we eat. I had a new set of clothes made for you last month. If you want anything, you have only to ask. Then why do you steal, Bhola?"

"I didn't steal the money," Bhola muttered looking quite embarassed. "Ididn't steal the money," he went on repeating.

Govind just could not bring himself to believe anything against Bhola. But then why was he not given a straight answer? Why did he act so cagey?

He was most irritated when Kesar Dev too chipped in with the remark, "So Bhola isn't what I took him to be."

"Let Bhola be," snapped Govind, "I'm sure he isn't dishonest."

A few days later one morning they found that Kesar Dev had disappeared. He was nowhere to be seen.

'Good riddance,' thought Govind, but the children and Rukmini were sorry he had gone.

"He was such a nice man and so helpful," she said. "I wonder why he left without telling us."

Now that Kesar Dev was out of the way, Govind lost no time in climbing the *neem* tree to get the mohurs. He thrust his hand into the hollow. There was a look of utter dismay on his face.

The treasure box was empty!

"The mohurs are gone! I'm sure that chap Kesar Dev has taken them," he shouted.

Everyone rushed to the courtyard and looked up at Govind.

He slowly climbed down the tree. His face was drawn and haggard. The only savings his father had thoughtfully hidden in the "treasure box" were gone. He had no doubt Kesar Dev had stolen them.

He turned to Gopal and Munna and asked them sadly, "Did you tell Kesar Dev about the treasure box?"

"I didn't tell him. Munna did," Gopal said nervously.

"Did you, Munna?"

Munna started crying.
"He promised me sweets if
I told him. But he went
away without giving me
any."

Govind controlled himself with an effort. There was no point blaming the child. He was too young to understand.

"The mohurs are safe, Bhaiya."

Govind was startled to

hear Bhola utter those words. He spoke so calmly, so coolly.

"The mohurs that bada sahib hid in the treasure box are safe," repeated Bhola, speaking in measured tones and smiling at the same time.

"How do you know about the mohurs?" Govind asked. "I didn't tell anyone."

"I overheard you and Kesar Devji talking about the mohurs hidden in the treasure box. I looked into the hollow while plucking neem twigs and found a cloth bag. I took it down and found the mohurs inside. So I hid them."

"Where did you hide them? Why didn't you tell me you had found them?"

"They're safe with me," Bhola replied. "They may not have been safe with you."

"But where are they?" Govind asked impatiently.

Bhola went inside without a word and returned with a small hammer. He tapped the portion of the well he had repaired. The stones came loose, leaving a small hole. Out of it Bhola pulled a small dusty cloth bag. He shook the bag and they heard a jingling noise.

"Here are the mohurs, Bhaiya," Bhola said handing him the bag.

Govind opened the bag and found the shining mohurs inside. He was overwhelmed.

Rukmini, who knew nothing of the mohurs asked, "What's this? Where did you get the mohurs, Bhola?"

Govind did the explaining. "From the beginning I didn't trust Kesar Dev. We would have lost the mohurs but for Bhola."

Rukmini was puzzled "You mean to say Kesar Dev left suddenly because he didn't find any thing in the treasure box?"

"No, it wasn't like that, Mataji." It was Bhola's turn to clarify. "He found a cloth bundle, heavy with coins. The copper coins and a few paise I had collected were in that bundle. He took it thinking the mohurs were in it.

"I owe you an apology, Mataji for the way I overcharged you while shopping. I'm sorrice still for taking the coins from the earthen pot. But I needed those coins. I was sure that, if Kesar Devji didn't find anything in the cloth bundle, he would be suspicious. He might have stayed on till he found the mohurs."



"But copper coins don't look like mohurs," Jagannath pointed out. "How did Kesar Dev get fooled?"

"Because he didn't look carefully. He was in a hurry and it was dark. He must have felt the cloth bundle and taken the contents to be mohurs."

"Bhola," said Govind, warmly embracing him, "Kesar Dev was a clever crook. But you managed to outwit him."

"I'm sorry, Beta I mistrusted you. I should have known better," said Rukmini, patting him on the back.

Bhola blushed a deep

brown.

The family's fortunes turned.

Tara was married to an eligible young boy. Soon afterwards Govind brought his wife home from her father's house.

Through hard work he distinguished himself as a vaidya.

But he could never forget those exciting days of 1857 when he thought his country's freedom was just round the corner. Nor the pride that swelled in his bosom as he watched Bahadur Shah Zafar sitting on the ivory throne in the palace courtyard.



When his mind was filled with such sweet but bitter memories, Govind often walked up to the front gate and stood gazing at the setting sun.

On one such occasion, he heard a soft voice, singing a plaintive melody. As the voice came closer, he could also hear the thrumming of the ektara.

Govind listened intently as the wandering minstrel passed slowly by. He was so engrossed in the words and the music, he forgot to give him a few coins.

Tears welled up in Govind's eyes as he felt the full impact of one of the most touching ghazals ever composed. The dying Emperor, condemned to live in solitary exile in Rangoon by the British, had been denied one last wish. All he had wanted was to be al-

lowed to return to his beloved country and be buried there after his death.

"Oh Zafar," the ministrel sang Bahadur Shah's lament, "thou art so accursed that thou cannot get even two square yards of land for burial in thy fatherland."

With the soulful melody ringing in his ears, Govind remembered his father.

"All's not lost," he told his children and grand-children as they sat round him, listening, wide-eyed, to his account of the War of Independence. "I've no doubt that you'll live to see the day when our country is free and our flag flutters proudly over the ramparts of the Red Fort."

From him the children heard, with rapt attention, of the brave fight

the Rani of Jhansi, with a handful of loyal followers, had put up against the mighty British. Their eyes glowed with excitement and pride as he spoke of their grandfather and how he had died fighting for the Rani.

They were never tired of hearing him talk of Abdul Aziz Khan, Mırza Yunus Khan, Anant Ram, Chintamani and good old Salma-bee, who had died within a few months of their returning to Delhi.

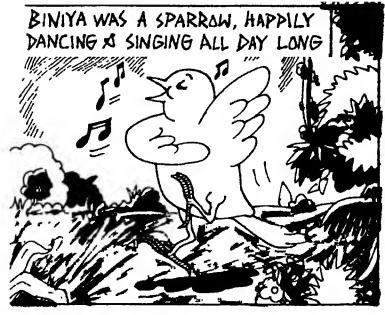
But of his own adventure on the Ridge, Govind was too modest to talk. So the children had to pry the story out of him, every little detail of it. And did they love to hear Bhola hold forth on how he had out-foxed Kesar Dev!

Concluded



Based on a Bengali Folk Tale

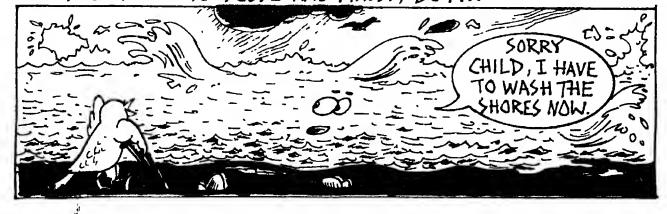
By NARESH and VINY



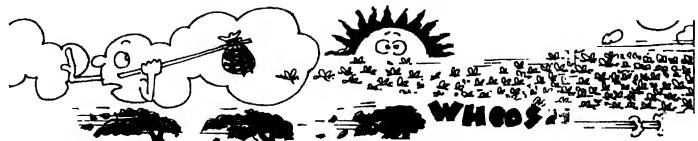




AT HER WIT'S END, BINIYA DECIDED TO GOTO SAGAR MAMA AND GET HIM TO DOUSE AAG MAUSI, BUT...







ON SEEING THE OMINOUS CLOUD OF MOSQUITOES, THE SUN WAS TERRIFIED. EVEN THE CLOUDS DECIDED TO DRIFT AWAY ...



An Editor Remembers

by K. Ramakrishnan

As I write this in February, sixteen months have passed by since I retired from Children's World, which I had joined exactly twenty-five years ago, in February 1968. The magazine was then only a fortnight old, having had its launching in the third week of January, at the Prize Distribution of Shankar's International Children's Competition.

The occasion was appropriate because the magazine was really an offshoot of the Competition. The founder. Shankar. was a pioneer in many respects. As the world knew him by then, he pioneered political cartoons in India since the thirties: the late forties saw him coming out with the first ever political cartoon weekly in the country, replete with humorous and satirical writings as well. A firm believer in children's capacities, capabilities, and talents, he conceived of a children's number of Shankar's Weekly and invited contributions through a competition, which again was a

pioneering effort, especially after it assumed international proportions from the very second year when it attracted entries from different parts of the world.

It was the dearth of good books for childrenother than costly imported ones-to be given away as prizes that triggered him off to poneer publishing of good books which children of India deserved. Independent India had, by then, not even gone into its third vear. He founded the Children's Book Trust in 1957, and in the wake of the name and fame it achieved in just ten years. he very much wanted the Trust to attain an international stature, and so handed over to it the responsibility of running the children's competition and publishing of the Children's Number This was in the early sixties The number of entries was increasing year by year; naturally, the number of prizes, too. Still there was a surfeit of good. attractive entries that missed prizes and,

thereby, a place in the Children's Art Number. and so crying for an outlet. Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, like many others known to and friendly with Shankar, was all appreciation for his taking up the cause of children and had at some point of time put the seed of an idea in him. of a magazine for children. Yes, thought Shankar, a magazine would be the answer to the problem that was bothering him.

In 1967, several homes in India, and hundreds of schools, libraries, educational institutions. and individuals one day received along with their mail a beautiful magazine. It was a specimen copy of Children's World Shankar knew it had been received well, and went about preparing the first issue for a formal release on January 23, 1968, by the then Finance Minister, Mr. Morarji Desai.

That was 25 years ago. For any institution, completing 25 years of existence is a great landmark. For a children's

magazine, with an exclusive readership, it is all the more so. Would you, dear reader, be surprised to know that Children's World 18 currently the oldest children's magazine in English in India? Its readers have, therefore, a good reason to rejoice that it enters a historic 26th year of publication in April 1993. I hope they will be indulgent if I give myself to nostalgia in the next few paragraphs.

As I said earlier, this magazine is an offshoot of the International Competition, to provide an outlet to some of the attractive entries. Therefore. unlike other magazines which generally suffer from a dearth of material to make up their contents. Children's World never faced a poverty of content-matter. We had only to go through the treasure-house with the Competition department and make a representative selection of the itemspoems, stories, essays, descriptive writings. anecdotes-that we needed for the issues week after week. That way, the work of the editor was comparatively easy. However, certain number of pages were reserved for grown-up writers, too-

writers who were willing to write for children; there were not many who could be included in that category, for that was a big hurdle Shankar was trying to cross those days, by taking to writing himself and thus cutting a path for others. Though the Children's Book Trust was established in 1957. tall 1968 at had published only a handful of books. Reason: Shankar found to his dismay that there were only a handful of writers willing to and capable of writing effectively for children The first ever book published by the Trust was from his pen, and a majority of the books that had come out in the first 20 years were also authored by him. So, he threw open the pages of the magazine for the few writers who came forward to try their hand at writing for children

Of course, there were others whom he invited to provide the variety that a magazine will need Prime Minister Indira Gandhi wrote the first article in the first issue—about her friendship with a Russian flier. This moving account was reprinted in the December 1984 issue which paid a tribute to her memory and her long association with the

Children's Book Trust even as one of its first trustees. The Science column was in the capable hands of Rosscote Krishna Pillai who captured in exciting details all of man's adventures into space and landing on the moonto mention only one of the several topics he handled. Saradındu Sanyal was even then a popular sports commentator and he handled the Sports pages. sometimes sending his weekly "despatches" even from places like Bangkok and Moscow where he might have accompained the Indian teams. The one and only Jai Cooper took over the Hobby column and wrote on stamps and stamp-collecting 1 still remember his angry but affectionate letter by which he returned the cheque that we had sent him. telling Shankar he would value more the thrill of writing for children than receiving a cheque Then came along Shankar's ioreigner friends, like Naomi Mitchison (JBS. Haldane's sister), who had spent quite a few years working for children in Africa. She gave us wonderful stories of and from the "Dark Continent", and passed on our cheques to her, to welfare organisations in

Mirica. I also remember Dorothy Parker, who introduced a column on Astronomy in Children's World.

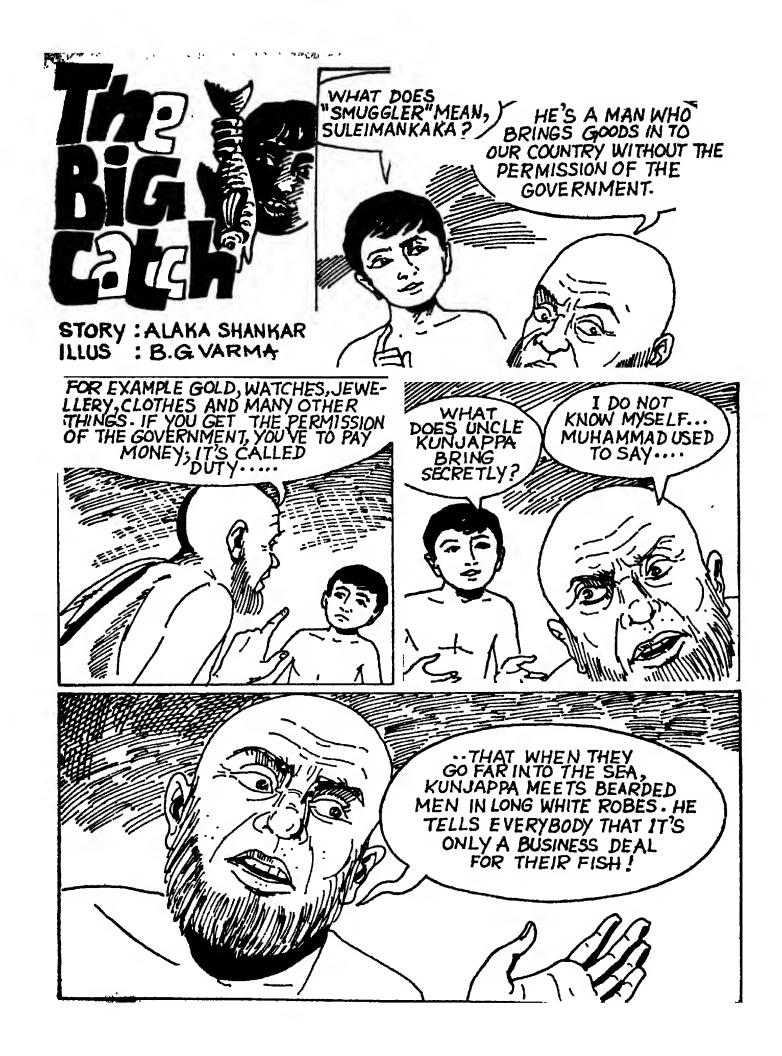
Those were the first two ears. By then children in india and elsewhere found that the magazine really encouraged the latent talents in them, and so began flooding us with their direct contributions hinting that we need not fall back very much on their entries to the annual competitions Thus we had a crop of new young writers and some fresh writings from them 'Those who were lucky enough to be in Delhi became regular visitors to the office, often asking for assignments like veterans! Ramu Damodaran (then hardly 10, now a top official in the PM's Secretariat) interviewed the U.N. Secretary General U Thant, and later the Deputy Director-General of UNESCO, Dr. Malcolm Adiseshaiah (incidentally he was my Economics Professor in the Madras Christian College, Tambaram.—among others, Sujata Mehta (now in the indian Foreign Service) "met" the founder of the SOS Villages, Dr. Hermann Gmeiner, and spoke to him with the help of an

interpreter. the Banerjee sisters, Indrani and Dolly, interviewed the Polish Prime Minister's wife when she visited the Dolls Museum; Bobby Nair (now an IPS officer) brought us a series of interviews after calling on world-renowned philatelists who had assembled in Delhi for an International Stamps Exhibition All these young friends did these interviews on assignment. When wellknown, established writers generally excused themselves from writing tor children, often calling it infradig to do so, there were many between 6 and 16 years who were willing to take their place So, right from the word 'go'. Children's World never had to go in search of writers or felt a paucity of contributors

But not everyone could be accepted Here I recall Shankar's advice. He was dead against using a printed, impersonal "regret slilp". He advised me to write to each of such contributors and explain why their written effort could not find a place in the magazine This exercise was very much appreciated by the young contributors. It helped us keep a two-way correspondence and it

helped them attempt improvements in the different departments of effective writing, viz choice of theme, presentation, and language. This only took the magazine closer to its contributors, who also formed a major chunk of our readers.

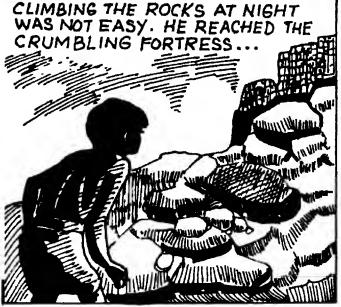
A¹most a similar exercise was attempted with grown-up writers. too The days were wnen the fame of the Children's Book Trust and the popularity of its publications slowly brought quite a number of up-and-coming writers to "Nehru House", wishing to hand over their manuscripts for books or expressing their keenness to write for books. Mr. Shankar would take the manuscripts from them. promising to go through them, and would next usher them to me telling them they should better first write for the magazine to get the feel of writing for children, and asking me to give them assignments. Thus Children's World also became a veritable "workshop" for these writers I shall refrain from mentioning their names as I might have to enumerate a long list. However, I can only say, and I am personally very Turn to page 68













THEN HE SLOWLY WENT INSIDE THE RUINS. IT WAS PITCH DARK INSIDE...



happy about it, that a majority of them "graduated" from Children's World and are now successful writers for children, with several full-length books (many of them prizewinning ones) to their credit. Shankar's pioneering mission—whether it relates to the magazine or books—was thus not a failure.

Getting back to my memorabilia, I recall how Children's World came to be identified with characters like Cheeky and Meeky, Minu, Perky and Raghu, Juneli, Sethu the l.ttle elephant, Kapish from the comics with the same name, Inspector Vikram, also from the comics..., the list will be unending. I will only single out Perky and his "letters" which are noth ng short of a literary phenomenon. because of their almost uninterrupted appearance for more than 22 or 23 years now. It's a record worthy of entry into Guinness or Limca, if that has not already happened Perky has endeared himself to the readers so much that many of themlike those of 20 years agovery much wish that he lived next door or at a place where they can send him brickbats and bouquets

through their letters (of course, also to be published). And those who realise that he is only a fictional character at least would like to know who has created this lovable character. Sorry, friends, my mouth is shut; you may try your luck with the present Editor!

I remember Children's World was the first to publish biographies of -well-known people doctors, engineers, authors, sportsmen, scientists, explorers, mountaineers, speedsters, athletes—in comics, in about a dozen strips per issue, as well as in full page format. And thereby hangs a tale, to borrow an expression from Shakespeare. Shankar was no doubt a cartoonist by profession, but he had great reservations about comics! He forbade us from including comics in the contents. Would you bel'eve it? Let's not discuss why it was so. He said, let there be one magazine without comics! Fortunately, he had not forbidden us from publishing readers' requests for comics! And slowly, he relented. He then said, "Okay, let's have our own comics!" which indirectly meant that he would have a final say in the choice of characters, the story, and

the drawings. He persuaded the staff of our art department to try their hand at comics. Yesudasan came out with Sethu: Anil Vyas and Reboti Bhusan made some successful efforts. When they left our service, I was at my wit's end. Then, during my visits to the British Council and USIS to pick up photographs and backgrounders, I chanced upon biographies in comics form and persuaded them to secure them for us on an exclusive basis—which they did—and we could satisfy our readers that we had at least a few pages of comics for them. When the British Council and USIS could give us no more, we got "Kapish" from Bombay. Shankar took a good look at the artwork and remarked. "Innocent. After all, an animal story. Take it." The comics were a rage with the littlest of our readers, till one particular sequence enraged Shankarof course, after it got printed! He was horrified to see the villainous hunter in the jeep carrying on a conversation with the monkey-hero. I had failed to notice this myself. though I was fully aware that such things were an anathema to Shankar. who held on to certain

norms and theories vis-avis stories for children. At the end of the particular story, we bade goodbye to Kapish, and comics for some time.

Then, the Indian agents of a syndicate in the USA offered "Prince Valiant" from the Walt Disney collection, again on an exclusive basis. This feature ran for nearly two years and one day Shankar pointed out: "There are no balloons! Can this be called comics? Prince Valiant had to beat a hasty retreat. Our Bompay friends came to our rescue with Inspector Vikram Shankar I ked the drawings, but advised me to edit the dialogues inside the balloons wherever necessary. In one story, the Inspector comes upon the figure of a slain woman in the drawing room. The "frame" showed blood oozing from the wounds. Before the next instalment appeared, an angry father wrote and told us how his little son was disturbed at the sight and was getting nightmares. I then remembered Shankar's strict instructions to our own staff illustrators to avoid selecting such sequences for picturisation. It was not as though Shankar would not approve

of stories with fighting. killing, and murder. But he was very particular that picturising them was better avoided. After all. children read about crimes in newspapers and also see photographs and "visuals" on the TV, he would argue, but drawings in children's books were a totally different aspect altogether. To use a newspaper cliche, we "killed" Inspector Vikram without bloodshed!

Then, for the first ume, we carried a sciencefiction in comics, in colour. The story was conceived by the artist, Tapas Guha. himself. He was unable to give us another serial. Around that time, an artist from Calculta tomed our staff. The specimens of work that Subir Roy showed us included some comics that were quite evecatching and so, the very first assignment Shankar gave him was adaptation of CBT's prizewinning book "Kaz ranga Trail" into comics When this was ready and was being serialised in the magazine he was given yet another prizewinner. "The Chandipur Jewels". This. too was serialised in Children's World and CBT subsequently brought them out in book form.

Both titles were sold out in no time. The result was a good demand for the tull-length books themselves, which went into multiple editions. It may interest our present leaders to know that the first book was later made in a movie by the Children's Film Society of India, while the second one had two "sequels" in book form.

The point 1 wish to bring out by this detailed narration is the change of attitude in Mr. Shankar towards comics. One can very well appreciate his insistence on 'healthy', purposeful comics. He was never in favour of the magazine going in ior cheap entertainment and gimmicks that one comes across in magazines, in general. He was always tor maintaining a standard and this applied to not only the books and magazine the Trust published, but in every one of its other activitiesall of which is now nistory.

To the best of my memory, for 13 pius years, Children's World carried only children's paintings on the cover—paintings that came from all over the world, of course, drawn from the treasure-house with the Competition department. The magazine

has, all along and even now, accepted only 'childoriented' advertisements. though if we so wished we could have had all kinds of advertisements. what with the wine contacts that Shankai enjoyed in the 60s and 70s. at least till Shankar's Weekly ceased publication in 1975. He firmly believed that the magazine printed at its own printing press should not be dependent on

advertisements. Well, it has continued to enjoy the usual affectionate "parental" support!

This memorabilia can go on for ever and ever. Maybe on another occasion, I might be prompted to recall more of the lighter moments that I personally had as the magazine's de facto and later de jure Editor for more than 20 years. The past quarter of a century has seen "the rise and fall" of

several magazines. Twentyfive years in the life of a periodical, other than a daily newspaper, denotes a mighty effort, a determination to espouse a noble cause. At this hour of glory, let us pay our silent tribute to that seer among pioneers-Shankar.

As the magazine goes on to its 26th year of publication, let me tell Children's World, "Wish vou weil!"

TEENAGE CRUSADER

MEXICO CITY: Thousands pollution and nuclear of children in Mexico today know what a rain forest is, and what threatens it. The knowledge does not come from their school books nor through the mass media, but thanks to the efforts of a child crusader, reports Panos.

Omar Castillo is 15 years old. He has already spent half his life campaigning for the environment When he was eight, he walked 1,400 kilometres from Mexico City to the fast vanishing Lacandon rain forest. He then camped outside the President's place in Mexico City. Since then he has marched and biked across the country to protest against

power stations.

Despite his appeals and crusades, Omar has not been able to persuade the adult world to stop destroying rain forests and polluting the environment

He now believes that children are the only hope And he has fought hard to ensure that children are as well-informed as possible by campaigning to have environmental education included in the school curriculum. He and his father undertook a five-month bicycle trip across the country to campaign for the introduction of environmental material into school textbooks.

This extraordinary persistence paid off, says the report, with the government promising to include such material in textbooks.

Mexico's adult env.romental movement is not effective and the country's environmental future looks bleak. The only hope lies in a strong children's movement. As Omar says, "Only the children can heal the planet; it is our home and Mexico is our house. We can't just pack up and go to Jupiter or Mars. We have got to take charge. No one else will."

(CEE-NFS)



Story: V. Suba (14) Illustrations: Chaitali Chatterjee

HERE are my shoes. Mom? Where did that that silly Veena put them?" I said brisiling all over. This was me, the typical, spoilt, brat. This chaos was a daily routine, the shouting, my violent tempers, the tantrums I threw, helped in adding a good deal of grey hair to both Mom and Pop I believed the root cause to be Veena who along with her mother worked for us.

At that moment she came rushing in, "Didip, your shoes are on."

"Yuks, out," I commanded in my loudest tone. "Can't you ever have a bath, wear clean clothes and brush your ever so wild hair properly?" I

raved I detested her very sight Ever since she started helping her mother with cleaning and keeping our house about ten months ago. I seemed to have changed I ranted and raved, worked myself into tempers and created such a pandemonium about that girl, that it must have made all our neighbours think ours was a mad house

Finally dressing up I ran downstairs for breakfast "Moni do you have to employ those two?" I began desperately. "Have you never seen Veena and her unwashed clothes, filthy hair, dirty unclean nails and can you never smell that foul odour emanating from her

body?"

"Enough of that exaggeration, Suba! Why her nails are very clean, it is only that her hair is wild and not bouncy, that gives her a dirty look. She's too poor to buy good clothes like you"

"Do you mind giving up at least two-three months of your pocket money to buy her clothes?" demanded Pop

I muttered to myself I had least two perfume baths a day, wore three different sets of clothes each day and here was Veena wearing the same set of clothes for ages (was it a week or so?).

"And they are so honest and hardworking. It's difficult to get house-maids



like them these days. ." piped up Mom, smiling.

"Pooh... you could easily get a much better one," I said believing myself to be the most logical and all-knowing person around. "Come on now! Time to leave," cried Pop...

After school, as I came out of the premises, who should be waiting as usual, but Veena. I shoved my satchel into her arms and ordered, "Walk at a distance behind us!"

My friends covered or wrinkled their noses chirping.

"Ooooh! what a rotten

odour. ."

"My . my perfume anyone?"

Annoyed I made a sulky face and as I reached home screamed, "I can very well carry my bag. Don't you dare come to school from tomorrow!"

Poor Veena seemed so humilated, she just went out

One day as I was watching video (though I had my exams the next day). Veena approached me trembling, "Will you please. te. te er" she started.

"What do you want?" I said exasperated.

"Please te. .teach me to read and write. At least to write my name," she begged.

"Humph. Me teaching you to write! What do you think, I've got all the time in the world? No way! And please spare me your presence and interruption. Don't you know I've got, my exam tomorrow?" I said sarcastically going back to my work (of watching films).

Days ran by as quickly as they always do and after my last exam was over, I invited all my friends to tea at my place.



Mom had prepared some mouth-watering dishes Veena, as usual her dirty self came in with the snacks and coffee

"My Suba! What a maid indeed!" Ruchi said her voice full of bitter sarcasm

"We have a butler and cook, both as neat as possible and here"

"And our maids are as tidy 'n' clean as a newly shaved jaw," piped in Monica giggling.

I felt pretty embarrassed

and shooed Veena away rather rudely. "Do you mind not throwing around your filthy presence. everywhere" I seethed at her

Blinking back tears she ran off

After a lovely time of playing games, chatting, and of course eating the irresistible goodies, my friends thanked and praised Mom, so exuberantly that is seemed like exaggeration even to me,

who was normally blinded by my friends extravagance. Mom forced me to take Veena along to hold the shopping bags, as I went to leave my chums. After shopping, when we were returning I started walking, thinking dreamily of our forthcoming trip to Goa.

"Please, Didiji, come to the pavement," wh ned Veena.

"Oh, hell'" I said but did not listen to her, a mistake which I regret still today, because screaming suddenly, she pulled me to the pavement Angrily I pushed her to the very spot I was previously standing on but it was too late. the oncoming truck raced over her and...

"Mom, Pop, quick where are you???" I cried and panting, narrated the accident to them. By the time we were by Veena's side on the road, a massive crowd had gathered around her. The whole scene is still fresh in my mind Those puddles of blood, with Veena lying in a swoon, bleeding profusely. her almost smashed left It was 11.30 pm arm Mom and had gone to the hospital and had not yet returned Meanwhile I was full of remorse and feeling sore with guilt and wrong. Why, she had turned out to be a gem of a girl How did an unclean body matter? I had committed a grave wrong and it was almost because of me that she was now lying serious . in the hospital. I hated and humiliated her, but on the contrary the girl had saved my life, sacrificing her own

The bell rang 1 ran to the door feeling small and ashamed. It was Pop

"Your Mom has got to stay back to keep Veena company at night as her own mother can't leave her infant son at home Veena is out of danger. Part of her arm had to be amputated You may go and see her tomorrow!"

I was shocked to death and stammered, "Oh Pop! I'm so sorry Her arm had to be amputated because of me Me??" I cried

He said nothing but this and went off "In a week's time I'm leaving for Calcutta to meet a specialist there to talk about an artificial arm for Veena Goodnight!"

'Wow' Thank heavens
for science another
replacement but of what
good?' I thought as I
crawled into bed "Pop
has been pretty quick"

The next morning I went to see Veena Four bottles of blood had to be given to make up for the loss in her body. Her left arm or rather what was left of it was thoroughly bandaged. I hugged her crying, "I am so very sorry Veena. Really, believe me!
You're a gem truly.
From now on we're firm
friends!" This seemed to
have healed all her wounds
for she cried in joy
"Really oh thank you
so much '" There was
really nothing I could do
for her but to pray to
God for her speedy
recovery.

I went to my father "Pop. I don't want pocket money for even a year. I'lease, quickly arrange for her artificial limb"

He smiled "Now I think you are my Suba, my generous little girl."

It was a hard thing to say, but not as hard as almost losing one's life, trying to save another's. And now, if it was for Vcena, I was prepared to do simply anything. I knew I would carry the burden of this guilt all my life She had taught me a very important lesson, that the dirtiest of humans have the finest of all qualities. This incident did another good thing, it taught me to be a better human.

From Past to Present

The Secrets of Indus Valley
By R. Rajagopalar
Illustrated by R. Ashish Bagchi

Price: Rs. 19.00

The School Upon a Hill By Kavery Bhatt Illustrated by Decpak Harichandan

Price: Rs 12.00

Amma Ka Parivar
By Saroj Mukherjee
Illustrated by Pramod Kumar
Price: Rs. 15.00
All published by Children's
Book Trust, New Delhi.

It is on archeaology.

It is definitely not boring.

On the contrary, The

Secrets of Indus Valley

is a very interesting book
which details different
aspects of the excavations
of the Indus Valley

Civilisation. The book tells
you of the men who
directed these excavations,
the treasures that were
unearthed, the seals that
were found, the still
undeciphered script, how

the civilisation came to an end. Besides, there is general information on archaeology and associated sciences

Ramesh Bagchi has
done a splendid job with
the illustrations The
Secrets of Indus Valley
will surely urge you to
read up further to check
out your past in order to
understand your present

Now to more recent tunes

Jagan, in The School Upon a Hill, does not want to leave home, his parents, his grandmother and pet parrot for Hill Dale, the boarding school where his elder brother and sister study. But he has to go and after a few problems initially, settles in well Till the day of the Summer Picnic It begins badly, setting the tone for the rest of the day Jagan gets left behind during a break in the bus journey to the

picnic spot. Comes a storm and we see its effect on the various characters in the book, how they fight with the storms that rage within themselves as well, to emerge, finally, cleansed and at peace.

Saroj Mukherjee's Amma Ka Parivar (Hındı) is a lovely book. It is the story of different animals which find love, sympathy, a friend and a home with the wife of a forest officer The lady, away from the big city lights, in lonely forest bungalows, soon learns to love the jungle and its creatures. She talks to her animal charges and she believes they understand her- how clse can one explain the langurs not harming her vegetable patch at her request or the Sarus Crane fetching the baby's toy, lost in the depths of the lake, on hearing him

cry?

Whatever it is, Amma Ka Parivar makes for interesting reading and re-reading. You cannot help but admire 'Amma' and unwittingly fall in love with those that she has cared for, be it the white owl or the chimpanzee or the nilgai or the others In the end. the author says that we must remember that the animals and birds and other creatures have equal rights on nature like Man and we must preserve our environment and coexist peacefully. Or else...

In Deep Space and Other Storics By Jaya Paramasivan Illustrated by

Suddhasattwa Basu
Published by Frank Educational
Aids Pvt. I td., New Delhi
Price: 25.00

Science fiction is not stories about aliens alone—its gamut is wider, aliens and outer space forming only a part of it it has yet to reach its height in India, especially for children. Therefore, whatever little is published

must necessarily stand up to a close scrutiny of content. We do not have specific sci-fi writers like. Isaac Asimov and Arthur. C. Clarke What we do have are writers of fiction and short stories turning their hand at sci-fi with the usual fare of outer space environs and alien beings, generally. Jaya Paramasiyan is a writer of this genre.

In Deep Space has three stories The first, of the same name as the title of the book, is about a journey in space in the year AD 3890. Tiny Shiba has been selected to join the crew of spacecraft Auro for the Grand Four Mission to see Jupiter, Saturn, Neptune and Uranus While repairing a fault in the antenna of Auro, Tinv Shiba is cast adrift His supply of oxygen is reaching its end He loses consciousness and is rescued by a spacecraft from Venus, believed to be inhospitable to life. The rest of the story is about how Tiny Shiba repays them for saving his life and is delivered safely to

his space station.

In 'Stranger than Fiction', the author sets the story on earth. Ron and Micky, on a trek, come across an injured Martian and help him nab a criminal from his planet. In 'On the Beach' Rocky finds a bottle with a moss-encrusted glass stopper. When he manages to pull out the stopper, Ricky is transported to a different time The bottle falls into the hands of a band of thieves. He meets Roon, a contemporary, who helps him recover the bottle and get back to his time.

The stories, especially the first, require closer editing. The inclusion of at least half a dozen more stories would have better justified the title and been a bargain, in terms of price and reading time. But for these, In Deep Space is a creditable attempt for a first time venture at sci-fi and we hope we shall see more of Jaya Paramsivan's work in this line.

-Bhavana Nair

PEN-FRIENDS CORNER

Those who wish to enrol themselves as members of the Children's World Penfriends Club may do so by sending us the accompanying form. Cut out the form, fill up the details neatly, and mail it to us. As the form helps in indexing preservation of records, its use is a MUST. All those who send in their particulars in the form will get priority in enrolment. Limit your hobbies and choice of countries to have pen-TWO. friends from to Whenever members write to their pen-friends it will be advisable to mention their member-number.

5436
Nidhi Walia (girl, 9)
C/o Mr. H.K. Ahluwalia
NABICO Ltd., Bagamoyo
Road, P.O. Box 2827
Dar-es-Salam
Tanzania
Stamps, music
Spain, Bhutan

5437
Pema Kelzang (boy, 16)
C/o Head Postmaster
Damphu Chirang
Bhutan
Collecting stamps, movies
Japan, Hong Kong

5438 Sonam Penjor (g, 15) Jigme Sherubling High School
Dorje House, Khaling
Tashigang, Bhutan
Collecting old Hindi songs
and coins
Japan

5439
Ashwin Mittal (b, 11)
BT-53 Shalimar Bagh
New Delhi 110052, India
Stamps, reading
India, US.A.

5440 Nidhi Varma (g, 10) C-2/116-A Lawrence Road Delhi 110035, India Painting, reading Any country

CHILDREN'S WORLD PEN-FRIENDS CLUB ENROLMENT FORM	
Heriber No (To be filled t	by other lssue dated
Nanie - Masier Miss	Age*. , year.
Address	
	******* *********** ***** *********** ****
Hobbies:	***************************************
Pen-friend wanted in (Country)	
*Age limit 16 years	Signature

5441
Mudit Garg (b, 8)
352 SFS Flats,. Phase IV
Delhi 110052, India
Collecting stamps, reading
Any country
5442
Charu Grover (g, 14)
B-2/251 Paschim Vihar
New Delhi 110063, India
Music, pen-friends
Any country

5443
G. Prahlad (b, 13)
No. 5-40-11, 5th Main Road
Baodiepet, Guntur 522003
A. P.. India
Collecting stamps and coins,
painting
Argentina, U.S.A.

5444
Radhika Aggarwal (g, 15)
Pocket A, 90-D
Mayur Vihar
Delhi 110091, India
Pen-friends, music
India, U K.

5445
Nilayam Ganguly (b, 14)
Beldih Lake Area Flats
Flat No. 36
Jamshedpur 831001
Bihar, India
Stamps, music
Japan, Argentina

5446
Anjali Joseph (g. 14)
212 Rugby Road
Leamington Spa
Warwickshire, CV32
GEH, U.K.
Writing, reading
India

5447
Gurpreet Singh (b, 15)
845 C.A. Apartments
Paschim Vihar
New Delhi 110063, India
Music, tennis
Any country
5448

Sonika Sachdeva (g, 13) A-396 Defence Colony New Delhi 110024, India Studying the sky, movies U.S.A., Bhutan

5449
Pawan Jit Joneja (b, 11)
D-25 Jangpura Extn.
New Delhi 110014, India
Collecting stickers,
pen-friends
Any country

5450
Shailaja B (g, 14)
Shakti House
J N V. Gajanpur
Shimoga
Karnataka, India
Collecting coins and stamps
Any country

Kentches Rijiju (b, 15)
PO NAFRA
Dist. West Kamang
Bomdila 790001
Arunachal Pradesh, India
Making friends, Chess
Any country
5452

Rashmi Mahadevan (g, 8) 302 G, Pocket II Mayur Vihar I Delhi 110091, India Reading, dancing U.S.A., Germany 5453
Akash Kishen (b, 15)
C/o Mr. Harikishen (A.E.)
SAD III, A.P.W.D.
Port Blair, Andaman
India
Collecting stickers, movies
Spain, U.S.A.

Prachee Jain (g, 14)
182 Katra Mashru
Dariba Kalan, Chandni
Chowk
Delhi 110006
Handwork, singing
India

5454

5455
Sandeep Beri (b, 11)
10, Ek Jot Apartments
Road No. 44, Pitampura
Delhi 110034, India
Reading, collecting stamps
U.S.A., Canada

5456
Premlata Kola (g, 14)
Sarayu-30
Anushakti Nagar
Bombay 400094, India
Painting, dancing
Any country

5457
Santosh Kumar Jena (b, 15)
Roll No. 2844, Sutlej House
Samik School
Bhubaneswar 751005
Orissa, India
Pop music, dance
Russia, Japan

5458 Sumathi C. (g, 11) H-207. Yamuna Apartments Alaknanda New Delhi 110019, India Reading, carnatic music Any country

5459
Gaurav Yadav (b, 13)
D-80 Patel Nagar II
Ghaziabad (U.P.), India
Reading, Badminton
U.K., India

5460
Hetal Gamit (g, 16)
M-7, C/2 Dilshad Garden
Delhi 110095, India
Reading, music
U.S A. Japan

Vijay Kumar (b, 16)
Roll No. 11, Class X-E
SDM School, Sonipat
Haryana, India
Painting, making friends
India, Australia

5462
Hazel Karkarıa (g, 6)

1, Hansol Co.op. Housing
Society
Hansol, Ahmedabad 382475
Gujarat, India
Drawing
Any country

Vaibhav Miltal (b, 13)
DB'79-C Hari Nagar
L.I.G. Flats
New Delhi 110064, India
Stamps, painting
Any country

5464
Megha Agarwal (g, 12)
C/o Dr. G.L. Sharma
Jeewan Deep, Subash Nagar
Dehra Dun 248001.

U.P., India Reading, Badminton U.S.A., Australia

5465
Biju T. (b, 13)
Qr. No. N/9, P.O. Belpahar
Dt Sambalpur
Orissa 768218
India
Stamps, skating
Germany, Bhutan

5466
Pratibha Choudhari (g. 15)
Type III/III, Qr. No. 48/C
O.F.
Chanda 442501,
Maharashtra, India
Reading, dancing

5467
Raju Kumar (b, 16)
1333 Sector XII-C
Bokaro Steel City
Bihar 827012, India
Stamps, cricket
Russia. U.K.

Any country

5468
Neha Mathur (g, 12)
4, Central Road, Jangpura
New Delhi 110014, India
Painting, Basketball
Australia, India

5469
G. Arun (b, 9)
4 II Main Road, Sai Nilayam
CIT Nagar, Nandanam
Madras 600035, India
Stamps, reading
Any country

5470 Mini (g, 13) B-232, Sector 14 Chandigarh 160014, India Pen-friends, dance Any country

5471
Naresh Mathur (b, 13)
27 Indraprastha Extension
Karishma Co.operative
Society Flat No. 190
New Delhi 110049, India
Stamps, reading
Germany, Switzerland

5472
Phurbu Dolma (g, 15)
Central School for Tibetans
Gurupura, Taluk Hunsur
Dist. Mysore 571188
Karnataka, India
Singing
U K., Germany

5473
St. Len Tathin (b, 15)
S/o Shri T. Tathin
P/o Along 791001
New Market
West Siang Dist.
Arunachal Pradesh, India
Music, reading
Switzerland, Spain

5474
T. Roshini (g, 16)
Block 57/B
New Ruabandha Sector
B.S.P., Bhilai Dist
Durg 490006
Madhya Pradesh, India
Playing guitar,
pen-friendship
U.S.A., Russia

5475 Amit Bansal (b, 15) IX/3608 Gian Gali No. 1 Dharampura, Gandhi Nagar Delhi 110031, India Photography, drawing

Japan, U.S.A.

5476

Tisha Arvind (g, 15)
A.E.S. Quarters
Kallepully, Palakkad
Kerala 678005, India
Reading, making friends
Any country

5477

Akash Mathur (b, 7)
4 Central Road, Jangpura
New Delhi 110014, India
Cricket, swimming
India Bhutan

5478

Nima Shamu (g, 15) C/o Shri N.K. Das State Bank of India P.O. Kalaktang Dist. West Kamang Arunachal Pradesh 790002 India Singing, gardening Any country

5479

Kailash Pradhan (b, 15)
Toniyangsha Primary School
Dist. Tashigang
East Bhutan
Football,
India, U.S A

5480

Rukmini Barua (g, 12) C/o Mrs. Baruni Barua State Bank of India Zonal Office New Medical Stores Building A.T. Road, Jorhat 785001 Assam, India

Painting, reading India, Germany

5481

Mayank Mohan (b, 10)
D-142 Kamala Nagar
Agra 282005, U.P., India
Writing, collecting
stamps & coins
India, U.S.A

5482

Anjah V. Kulkarni (g, 13)
"Ratnadeep"
Near Devdhar Hospital
Pimpri, Pune 411017
Maharashtra, India
Reading
USA., India

5483

Siddhart Rakwal (b, 14)
C/o Mr Gurmej Singh
Rakwal
Vill. Tangoshah
P O. Taragarh
Teh. Pathankot
Dist. Gurdaspur 143534
Punjab, India
Stamps & coin collecting
U S A., Germany

5484

Tulika Sood (g, 10)
NH-5, Block-P, Number 6
N.I.T. Faridabad
Haryana 121001. India
Singing, reading
Any country

5485

Manuraj Singh (b, 16) M/s Darshan Singh & Co GT Road, Goraya 144409 Dt. Jalandhar, Punjab, India Meccano, Computer programming US.A., Germany

5486

Shital R. Thakkar (g, 10) 53/54 Bhakti Nagar Society Maktampur, Bharuch 392012 Gujarat, India Watching TV, drawing Any country

5487

Sunil Kumar (b, 15)
No. 2720 Nehru House
Bangalore Military School
Bangalore 560025
Karnataka, India
Drawing, reading
Australia, France

5488

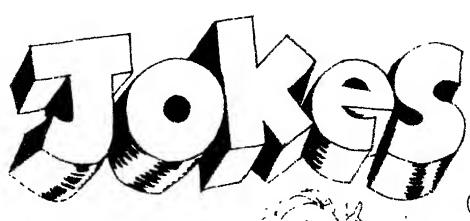
Kavitha P. (g. 15)
Jawahar Navodaya
Vidyalaya
Gajnur (P), Shimoga Dist.
Karnataka 577202, India
Reading, sports
Any country

5489

Parth D. Mankad (b, 9) Shiv, Navapura Mandvi Kutch 370465 Gujarat, India Music, reading Any country

5490

Pragya Agarwal (g, 11) 73/1 Grasim Staff Colony Birlagram, Nagda M.P. 456381, India Painting, dancing Japan, Germany



"Waiter, have you got frogs legs?"
"No, sir, I always walk this way."
"How do you get down from a camel?"
"You don't. You get down from a duck."

Teacher: Are you sure

W. 37. "

Teacher: Are you sure that's your mother's signature on the note' Student: Oh, yes, Madam—here's the tracing to prove it.

Grandma: I like to go to bed and get up with the birds, don't you?
Grandson: No I like to sleep in my own bed.



Customer (to Barber): That's a lot of money for a haircut—after all I'm almost bald.

Barber: Yes, it was the time taken to find it, that cost money.

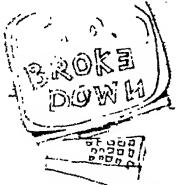
"Mother gave Dad some soapflakes instead of cornflakes for breakfast, by mistake."

"Was he cross?"

"Certainly, he foamed at the mouth."



Visitor (at zoo): Where have all the adders gone? Keeper: They're helping out in the accounts department—the computer's broken down.



"Do you know why Eskimoes eat candles?"

"No, why?"

"For light refreshment."







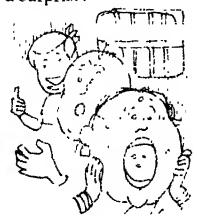
Where are Kings and Queens usually crowned? On the head.



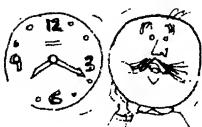
A lady went to buy some wool to knit a sweater for her dog.

"It would be better if you'd bring him in," said the sales lady, "then I can tell you how much wool to buy."

"Oh, no," said the customer, "it's supposed to be a surprise."

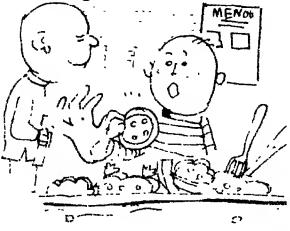


Father: That was some thunderstorm last night. Son: It certainly was Mother: Why sidn't you wake me up? You know I can't sleep in a thunderstorm.



"My dad makes faces all day."

"Why does he do that?"
"He works in a clock factory."



"Waiter, there's a button

"Oh, it must have come off

when the salad was

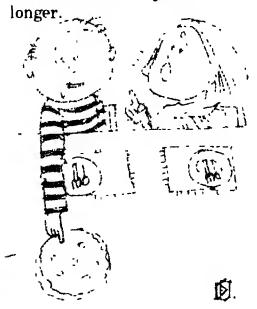
in my salad."

dressing."

Mother: Rahul, it's rude to keep stretching across the table for the cake. Haven't you got a tongue? Rahul: Yes, but my arm's



Visitor (at gate): Does your dog bite strangers?
Man: Only when he doesn't know them.





Why do cows in Switzerland have bells round their necks? Because their horns don't work.



Shamin Ara (13) Bangladesh Nehru Award Remote hilly area

DL,-11044/93

SPEED LIMIT Eat 2 Lacto Kings per minute ONE WAY
You can't
stop at one'
So just eat it!

GREEN SIGNAL It only means eat more Lacto King

SWEET SHOP AHEAD Remember 10 refill

STATE OF THE PARTY OF THE PARTY.

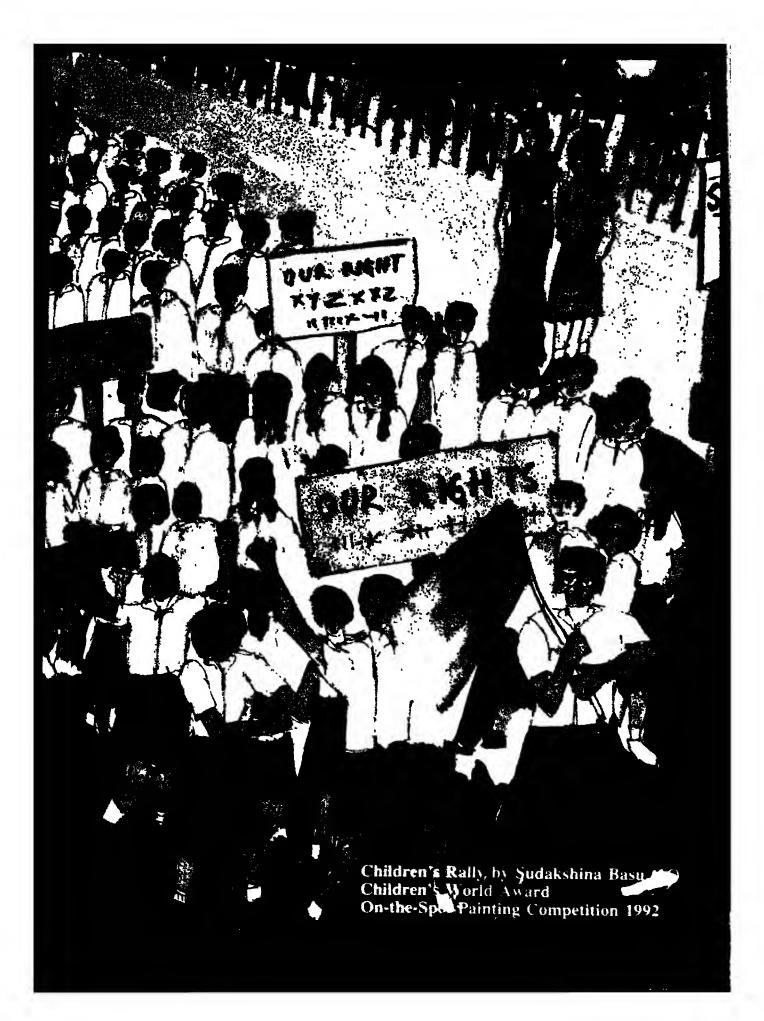
HIT A BUMP Pop 3 Lacto Kings while you're up there SILENCE ZONE Don't crunch just chew

R. No. 10 58

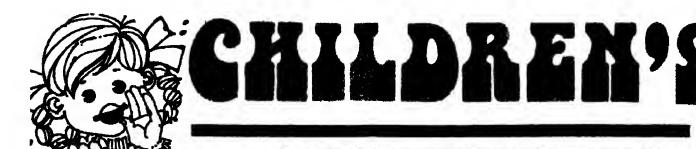
COLLOW THE PARRYS LACTO KING TRAIL

SO TASTY, YOU JUST CAN'T STOP EATING IT









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Design and Layout Subir Roy

Circulation & Advertisements A.J. Joseph C.P. Ravindran

Area Representatives BOMBAY C.H. Viswanath 502-A. Arun Chambers. 5th Floor, 317, Shahid Bhagat Singh Road, Opp.-Fort Market Bombay 400038 Telex . 78050-ASCO IN

MADRAS T. Balachandran **Business Representative** 92, Brindavanam Nagar Valasaravakkam Madras 600087 Phone: 420290

Subscription Rates

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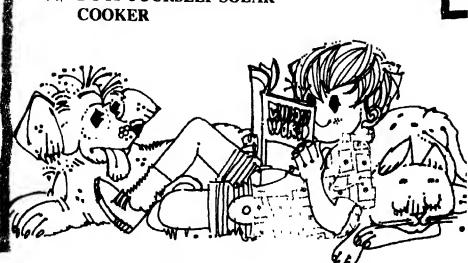
LET EVERY DAY BE A SUN-DAY

THE EARTH IS AN ENERGY BANK

ENERGY LINGO

ENERGY DICTIONARY

DO IT YOURSELF SOLAR COOKER



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DEAR EDITOR.

HOW HUMANE ARE WE?

It was mid-day Most of the roads were filled with demonstrators. The sky was ringing with their slogans Roofs, balconies, windows and the roadside was filled with spectators I was also watching them standing by the side of the road. There were many hawkers too accompanying them. Some people ate gram to entertain themselves Suddenly my eyes came to rest on a very old man. His clothes were torn His eyes were sunken and face dry. He looked greedy and foul. He squatted on the footpath as if unaware of the entire surroundings He looked at people for alms One

of the spectators came to him munching gram. He was a bit careless and spilled a few beside the beggar. The old man picked the gram and ate it. Some grains slipped out of his hand and rolled under the feet of the demonstrators. He stretched his hand to pick them up, but the demonstrators feet crushed the grain to powder. He tried again and again but his own hands came under their feet Blood began to ooze out, one of the demonstrators in his hurry trampled him and the poor fellow fell down. No one cared a fig for him. Everyone was watching the demonstration. It was a sudbhavna march for the preservation of human

rights and communal harmony but who cared for this beggar?

Vıkaslı Kunıar (17)

MOST WANTED

Why is Children's World the most wanted magazine among children? What is it that has invested Children's World with such a unique grandeur and glory? The secret lies in the sweet stories, instructive and interesting articles and dazzling illustrations that adorn every page. The informative articles, terrific vocabulary and marvellous cover-picture really provide a feast to the eye and mind. Wishing you more success in forthcoming issues

Manish Somani (15), Midnapur

DEAR READERS.

Every day is a Sun-Day Especially in a country like ours. Yet we are so given to taking the Sun's presence for granted, we quite forget to acknowledge his importance in our lives.

Tune was when the day began with a Surya-namaskar This elaborate yoga exercise was less of paying obeisance to Surya and more of toning upwaking up every muscle in the human body. This nevertheless subconsciously drew your attention to the Sun and led to a brief communion with him in the dawn hours when the sun is most benign. . Time was! It may be human to err but Nature has her own set of rules and will brook no indifference. Man will have to pay

the price The liberties he has taken with Mother Earth are manifest in the imbalances in its ecosystem, its environment.

We cannot even begin to enumerate what all we owe to that majestic ruler in the sky, the brightest star, except admit that the Sun is our very Lifegiver, our day and night

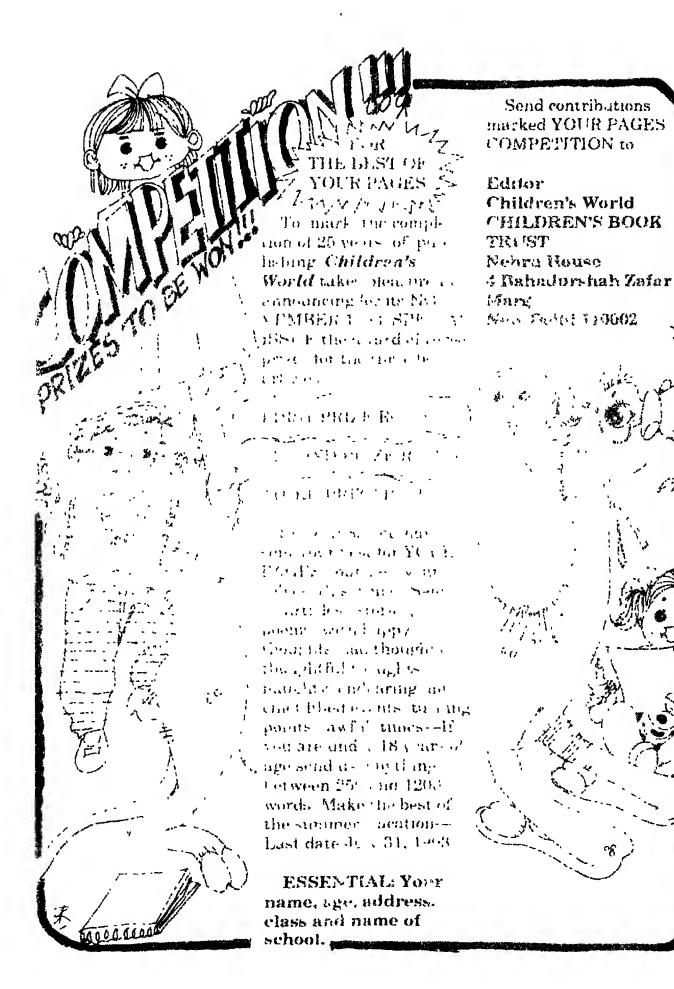
Time is, to redeem ourselves and give back to Nature what we have robbed it of. How does one give back to the sun the tremendous warmth, energy and life-forces it has been bestowing on us since time immemorial?

Some gifts are obviously only for the taking—but the least we can do is acknowledge the magnitude of the magnanimity. The world does this by

celebrating May 5 every year as World Sun-Day. The Gujarat Energy Development Agency went a step further to mark the occasion. Their staffer, Nandini Gandhi prepared an entire package for Children's World which outlines the role of the Sun in our lives, how we can obtain maximum benefit from sun rays during the day and even use this daytime gift to light up our nights by storing solar energy

So enlightening are the Sun-Day Pages you will never look the Sun in the eye again without feeling grateful for his bountiful gifts.

Happy reading and do make every day a SUN-DAY.





Dear pairs and unpairs,

Have you ever thought about socks in a systematised, regular way? I mean have you ever given a serious glance towards the fact that socks may be the cause of the chaos and confusion in the whole world? What I am saying is that socks that also went into the Ark two by two, as did shoes and gloves and spectacles and trousers and shorts and certain odd species of pencils, are the only ones that seem to delight in living single. If you think I'm talking through my sock, sorry hat-then let me give you the facts straight.

Have you ever come across a pair of trousers or shorts with one leg missing completely? Or a pair of spectacles which is not a pair? Even a new pair of shoes or gloves remain in a pair, even if one is under the cupboard and the other is on the window sill. But socks! Heavens! They just don't seem to get along even for a moment. A black sock makes great friends with a blue one, the other blue one goes into a sulk and lies hidden under a box full of hankies. The pair of the black sock can't be found at all, it's probably

12 2 18 m

enjoying itself in a sack of potatoes in the middle of Ireland. And goodness help you if you have to wear white socks to school. Then you are in real trouble, serious trouble.

You'd think every white pair of socks looks like every other white pair. What's the difference, you'd ask. White is white. So if you lose one of the pair, you can always take one from the other pair. It's not that simple! Not at all.

Let me tell you what happened to me just last week. My mother got me two pairs of new white socks.

"This is all you'll get till the end of term," she warned. "And I'm buying them because I want you to go to school without looking like a camel with eight different legs. Yesterday one of your socks was yellow!"

"But...that was supposed to be white!" I cried.

"There's a mile of difference between what something is supposed to be and what it actually is.

Now, you are supposed to be a hard working..."

I took the two pairs of socks and fled.

Well, I wore each pair once and then on Monday



morning. I went to my cupboard with an air of quiet confidence. There would be no problem today, I thought to myself. There'd be two pairs of nearly new, washed white socks in my cuboard. If I found only three instead of four socks. no trouble at all. I'd still find a pair. And if I found only two, that would still be a pair of white socks. White! Not cream, or yellow or supposed to be white!

I even hummed to myself as I opened the cupboard. I found one sock! One white sock! A single sock!

Even then I didn't realise what fate had in store for me. The other sock would be somewhere close. I would surely find it. I rummaged around and hey presto! I found another sock. A white sock. I grabbled it. I picked up the other one triumphantly. I bent to put them on. I stopped. They were not a pair. Yes, they were white but one had a faint brown stripe down the side. The other

was plain. I had not noticed this before. I dived into the cupboard again. Out came belts, hankies, old test papers, clips, pens with no nibs, pencil stubs, loads of blue, brown, black socks, one red sock, a green scarf but no white sock. Not one with a faint brown stripe. Not one plain.

Then from the corner of my eye, I saw something white under my bed. I took a flying leap, knocked my head on the edge of the bed and came up with

CHILDREN'S WORLD MAY 1993

a white sock, a plain white sock. No brown stripe. I almost yelled out in glee but I'm glad I didn't. because when I looked for the other white sock the one I found first, it was not where I had put it. I looked at the desk, the chair, the bed, under my books, even on top of the cupboard. It was nowhere. Then when I had almost given up, I noticed something white inside my left shoe. I dived down and picked it up. It was a single sock. A white sock.

With a faint brown stripe running down the side...

I would like to say that my mother found me years later, sitting numb and still, while socks of all colours and sizes crawled over me. I would like to say that I became a folk hero often remembered for having sacrificed my mind for socks. "A genius," people said, "a magnificent mind if it weren't for the socks that exploited him, ruined him, drove him to madness."

But all that really happened was that my mother descended on me like a thunderbolt in a sari and rained socks on me. Actually she rained only one sock on me. A new sock. A new, white sock. A new, white sock with a faint brown stripe down one side.

Now if I could only find its pair, I would...

Yours oddly and disorderly,

Ретқу

PRINCIPLES OF LIFE

Never be disheartened when you have received a blow,
Work hard and have courage to know, that life's like a mountain, high and low, filled with joys and sorrow, with many changes and new tomorrows.
Just remember in life a few good things.
Never be bad to anyone, and always learn something from everyone.

Always learn the best from those who are good.

and ignore those who are bad and rude.

Don't just point out the bad things of
others

but help them like your sisters and brothers.

Never have hatred for anyone, as this world is for everyone.



Amit Roy (15)

Something special is coming your wu,, Colourful, witty, bright and gay, To liven up your holidays, After school-books are put away.

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A Czechoslovakian tale



Story: O.P. Bhagat Illustrations: R.Ashish Bagchi

In the cold countries snow has inspired many poems and tales. The stories range from folk and fairy tales to modern novels. Also true adventure stories.

As it falls softly in flakes, the snow looks beautiful. And beautiful are the stories about it. Some have a touch, sometimes more than a touch, of sadness.

Snow has a bleak side too. So some of the stories are of witches or other such characters who live in icy and cheerless palaces or places. From Nepal and Tibet come tales of the yeti or abominable snowman.

As you know, Czechoslovakia is now, not one but two republics—the **Czech** and the **Slovak**, But this is an old tale and should be as much of the one as of the other.

There is a similar Russian tale too. This is not surprising. Stories, like birds, easily cross and recross the borders of nearby countries.

N a Czechoslovakıan village the winter's first snow was falling. All the children were out, watching or playing with the snowflakes. But Ivan and his wife Marie stood silent as they looked out at the scene from the window of their firelit room. They had no child, and this often made them sad. To cheer up his wife, Ivan said, "Look, a girl is making a snowman over there. Let us go and help her."

The couple went out. They helped the girl by outting more snow on the mage. And then it was ready—not a snowman but a snowchild.

Ivan liked it. To make it more lifelike, he drew the shape of a mouth on its face...But what was this? He felt the warmth of fresh breath on his hand.

As he looked at the snowchild, Ivan found its eyes smiling back at him. He feared that it was the doing of some spirit, and crossed himself to ward off evil.

But Marie looked

happy. "There is nothing to fear," she said. "Our sad days are over. God has sent us a child." And she hugged the snowchild. What had been an image responded with the same affection.

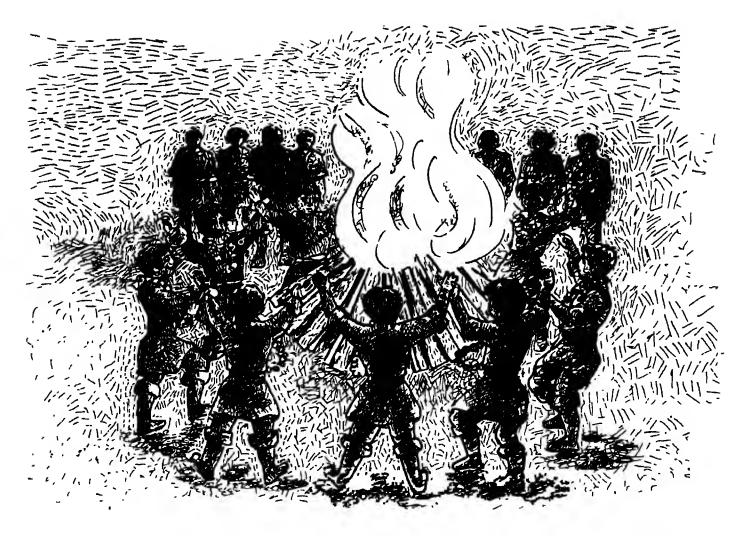
The two took the child home. As she had been born of snow, they named her Snowflake. The girl, with lovely blue eyes, was white as snow. And her long pale hair was like a mass of moonbeams. The silent cottage was filled with her laughter.

The village children liked Snowflake. They took her out with them when they played their winter games.

Days passed. The cold of winter came to an end. The first spring flowers came up on what had for weeks been frozen earth. There was a new joy all around.

But Snowflake did not look the happy child she had been all through winter. She no longer went out with the other children to walk or play.





While the others played outside, Snowflake sat in the shadows near the window. She stared silently at whatever went on in the spring air.

As the days passed, the sun became brighter. And brighter looked everything around with the hues of summer.

Now Snowflake looked sadder than before. While the sun was not up yet, she made for a place where ferns grew thick all over. And there she spent the day deep in leafy coolness.

One day a summer

storm blew over the village. This made it cooler. With that something of her winter cheerfulness came back to Snowflake.

But soon it was warm as before. Snowflake too was as sad as she had been one or two days before.

Then it was the midsummer day's eve. There was a kind of festival in the village. All day there was singing and dancing in the streets.

In the evening the children wore garlands of flowers. They were going

to dance round a bonfire, made in a clearing some distance away. As it was cool at the time, Snowflake went along with them.

Round the fire the children danced. Then they heard what sounded like a deep sigh. They also saw some haze up in the air.

Someone noticed that Snowflake was no longer among them. All looked for her in the tall grass and among the trees growing nearby. But there was no trace of her.

The snowgirl had melted away in the heat of the bonfire.



Energy Today and Tomorrow

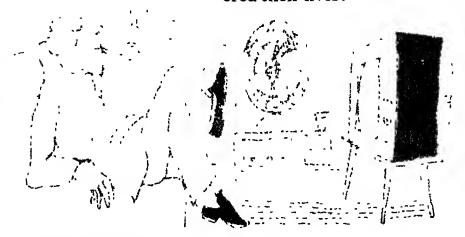
Our ancestors did not use as much energy as we use today. In the very beginning, more than a million years ago, the only energy primitive man used was what his body made from the food he ate—the roots, wild berries and nuts he gathered, and the small birds and beasts he hunted. Great increases in energy have oc-Today and one hundred crore times more energy than the early man.

The easy availability of power-packed energy ources such as coal, oil

(petrol, kerosene, diesel) and natural gas has made day-to-day living easier. Tasks for which early man had to sweat and toil, often labour for days, can now be done simply by the flick of a switch or the start of an engine. Energy has given our age speed, comfort, industry, leisure and pleasure.

Think of the many appliances you use as a matter of routine each day, the many joys you take for granted...the gas

stove, mixer, toaster, refrigerator and oven in your kitchen, the lights and fans in every room in your home, the hot water for your bath, your favourite TV serial, your ride to school, the lift you take to the top floor of a highrise building, a chat with your friend over the phone... Look back in time. How did your grandparents, great grandparents and their ancestors manage these tasks? What were the energy sources that powered their lives?



Unfair Energy Use

Today seventy-five per cent of the world's resources are used by twenty-five per cent of the world's population. There is a sharp contrast in the quantity and the quality of energy used by the industrialised nations such as Japan, U.S.A., the European countries and the developing nations such as India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and many countries in Africa and South America. The amount of energy an average American uses in a day is just a little less than the energy an Indian uses in a whole year. Unfair differences exist even within our own country. The city dweller uses much more energy than a villager. Women and young girls trudge miles each day to gather firewood to cook a simple family meal. Some cannot even afford to have a light in their homes. while we in the city use more energy than we need.



Our Planet in Peril

Scientists predict that our oil and natural gas reserves may not last beyond fifty years, some give it a century. While our coal reserves may last for a century or two, the Persian Gulf will demand its price for every precious drop of oil. Even more foreboding is what the environmentalists are worrying aboutthe Greenhouse Effect. Yes, the earth is 'running a fever' because of our indiscriminate and excessive consumption of energy. The burning of fossil fuels-coal and oilto produce electricity, and the fumes spewed from our vehicles have resulted in the accumulation of toxic gases and noxious substances in the atmosphere. On the other hand, the cutting down of forests has made nature's air-purifiers trees—unable to cope with all the poisons in the atmosphere. As a result, planet earth is in great peril.

The concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere has doubled since industries came into being. A major greenhouse gas, carbon dioxide, is



released into the atmosphere by the burning of fossil fuels. This carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases have now become a 'heat-trap'. They prevent the sun's heat from escaping into the atmosphere. As a result the earth is warming up. Scientists estimate that the earth's temperature could rise by 4° to 5°C over the next 50 to 60 years if we continue to use way we quences have a l'amines droughts, diseases, desertification... And the future generations will have to pay the price of their parent's greed.

At present, we are at the crossroads. We can opt to destroy our planet or protect it. The choice is entirely ours. We have to make it TODAY.

We have to choose energy sources that are in harmony with nature, energy sources that will assure good health and longevity for all creatures of the planet, energy sources that will last forever, that are clean, non-polluting and can meet the needs of both the rich and the poor. And for this, we have to just raise our heads towards the sun to find an answer.

As the world celebrates SUN-DAY on May 5, the day the sun shines the brightest, let us take the lead to use the sun's energy to redeem mankind.

Can you remember a single day when you have not been greeted by the sun? Have you stopped to think of what should happen if, one fine day, the sun stopped shining? Of course, we have no reason



to worry. Scientists believe that the sun will continue to shine for another four billion years which, for all practical purposes, is forever.

We, in India, are lucky as far as sunshine goes. India is in the tropical belt and we can look forward to many bright sunshine days, more than 300 a year in some states. Therefore we have a golden opportunity to convert sunlight into energy. Using the sun's energy is not new. It has been used since the first apple was eaten and the first log of wood burnt. Ancient warriors, scientists, craftsmen, farmers, housewives, and healers have used solar energy for their own ends. What then is new and exciting about solar energy? It is the way we can use an ancient energy source in the modern day and age.

We can use solar energy to cook food—without a fire, heat our bath water—without an electric results and heater, provide refrigeration to preserve our foods and

protect life-saving vaccines—even when the sun is so warm that it would take mere seconds for ice to melt. Does this sound impossible? It is actually happening. The Sun Movement is gathering momentum the world over. Come, join the Solar Pioneers. Have 'Fun with the Sun' and give a clean, healthy earth to yourself and to those yet unborn.

In these pages we will show you many ways in which you can celebrate SUN-DAY, everyday... Yes, if you are wise, persistent and persevering, you can convert sunshine to gold.

is an Energy Bank

In their day-to-day lives, most people manage their monthly expenditure from their regular 'income'. But for special occasions such as a family holiday or in case of unforeseen or large expenses such as a sickness in the family, a wedding, the purchase of a car, a washing machine, or buying a house, they dig into their savings.

These savings or 'capital' is what they may have collected over the years or inherited.

Fossil fuels are like capital resources, accumulated over time, an inheritance received from nature. An inheritance which has taken nature millions and millions of years to create.

On the other hand, renewable energy sources such as the wind, wind, water and wind reavailable fortunt; energy sources such as wood and other organic wastes are renewable within the span of our lives—of course, only if we look after them! They are like income sources, available daily, seasonally or annually, as the case may be.

Savings and inheri-

tance once used up are gone forever, or may take many many years, sometimes many generations, to accumulate, whereas income can be generated again and again, daily, monthly, or seasonally with effort and intelligence.

Today, fossil fuels such as coal, oil and natural gas meet almost 90 per cent of the world's energy needs. This also means we are depleting these non-renewable energy sources at an alarming rate. In one year mankind gobbles up the fossil fuels that took nature roughly a million years to produce In the process mankind also pollutes the earth.

Do you think it is wise to continue using fossil fuels at this rate?



CHILDREN'S WORLD MAY 1993

"Heating Up" with the Sun

The sun's heat energy can be used for heating and distilling water, cooking food, heating rooms, drying timber, chemicals, fruits, spices and condiments, and airdrying products such as milk powder. These tasks generally require comparatively lower temperatures in the range of 60°-100°C and can be obtained by varying adaptations of simple Flat Plate Collectors. These are made from materials that collect and absorb the sun's energy. Remember how hot a car feels when it is parked in the sun, with the window glasses rolled up. The Flat Plate Collector works on the same principle.

Solar energy collector "machines" such as the solar cooker, solar water heater, solar dryer and solar still (which distills water) do their job by lying around in the sun with a little assistance from sunfriendly materials. They





have transparent material such as glass to trap the sun's heat. They are made from materials that are good conductors of heat.

Dark colours such as black are used so that more of the sun's also provided in the solar devices to make the the collected energy is not lost.

You may have played with a mirror, focussing sunlight to create a spotlight on someone's face, or a magnifying lens to set a ball of paper on fire. The sun's energy can be used similarly for tasks which require higher temperatures such as making steam, electricity, refrigeration and sterilisation. When higher temperatures are required concentrating collectors are used. These have several mirrors and lenses that focus the sun's energy onto one spot.

The solar furnace in Odeillo, France, has sixty-three flat mirrors. The mirrors turn automatically as they follow the sun across the sky. The mirrors focus the sun rays onto the furnace which produces heat upto 5400°F (3000°C). The largest solar power plant in the world is in California. It has 1.8818 mirrors arranged in a circle around a central tower full of oil, When the oil gets heated up it flows to work a generator to produce electricity. A small such experimental solar thermal power plant has been set up near New Delhi.



"Lighting Up" with the Sun

Sunlight can also be directly converted into electricity by the solar photovoltaic process using a device called the solar cell. These devices are entirely man-made and date back to a few decades to the invention of the silicon solar battery. Making electricity from sunshine is almost as simple as sunbathing. When sunlight falls on the silicon solar cells, which look like "sparkling round mirrors", they dislodge the electrons from the properly treated silicon and thus cause an electric current to flow. Electricity generated this way can be stored in batteries during the day and used at night or

whenever it is required. Today many products in the market, calculators and watches, are powered by solar cells. Even cars and aeroplanes are designed to run on solar cells. The exploration of space and the landing of man on the moon would not have been possible without these solar photovoltaic cells.

The solar photovoltaic technology is very useful for developing countries like ours where many small, remote, distant villages and islands are without electricity. Solar energy can be used to provide light and electricity to these villages, to

operate pumps in their fields, run their TV sets, fans, and even provide lights for fishing boats out at sea. In India, many villages have the boon of lights at night because of this technology which, though a little expensive, 🕝 has several promising applications.

Sunshine Tea

Take a glass jar (a jam bottle will do) and fill it with water. Suspend two tea-bags in it. Place the glass par in the sun. As the tea brews the water will darken. If you put your tea out in the sun at 9.00 a.m., when will your tea be ready?

When the tea is ready you can drink it with either honey and lime, or milk and sugar. So next time invite your friends and have a wonderful Sunshine tea party gas, and oil.

Energy Lingo

BTU

A measure of heat energy (British Thermal Unit).

Charcoal

A carbon containing material produced by the heating of wood. Often used as a fuel.

Chemical Energy

A form of energy contained in coal, natural

Coal

A black combustible solid formed from plants. Often used to generate electricity.

Crude Oil

Formed from animal and plant material at the bottom of ancient seas, usually a black liquid.

Energy

The ability to do work, derived from the conversion of an energy source.

Fission

The splitting of atoms to release energy.

Food

Stored chemical energy produced by the conversion of solar energy through photosynthesis. A source of energy for animals.

Fossil Fuels

Formed from ancient plants and animals. Coal, oil, and natural gas are fossil fuels.

Fuel

Something that burns to produce heat energy.

Fusion

The combining of atoms to release energy.

Gasoline

Produced from refined crude oil.

Geothermal

Heat energy from within the earth.

Heat Energy

A form of energy produced from the combustion (burning) of coal, oil, natural gas, or the fission of uranium.

Hydrocarbon

A molecule made of hydrogen and carbon atoms, like coal, oil, natural gas.

Hydroelectricity

Electrical energy produced by a water-powered turbine generator normally located inside a dam.

Lignite

A brownish, peat-like coal.

Methane

The most common combustible gas found in natural gas. It contains 1 carbon and 4 hydrogen atoms (CH₄).

Natural Gas

A combustible gas found in the earth used to heat homes, water, and cook food.

Nuclear Energy

Energy produced by changes in the nucleus of atoms.

Oil Shale

A sedimentary rock containing kerogen. The kerogen when heated yields crude oil.

Primary Energy

Energy in its naturally occurring form; coal, oil, natural gas.

Propane

A combustible gas found in natural gas. It contains

3 carbon and 8 hydrogen atoms (C_sH_s)

Refuse

Useless, unwanted, or discarded materials (garbage). Can be used to generate electricity, or produce natural gas.

Renewable Energy

A nondepletable source of energy, such as the sun.

Solar Energy

Radiation energy from the sun. The primary source of all energy.

Synthetic Fuel

Gaseous or liquid hydrocarbon fuel produced from a solid hydrocarbon fuel, such as coal.

Tidal Power

Power obtained from falling and rising ocean tides.

Uranium

The fuel used in a nuclear reactor to generate electricity.

Wind

A form of kinetic (moving) energy produced in part by the sun's heating of the earth.

Wood

Formed from the conversion of the sun's energy through photosynthesis.

Energy Dictionary

Match the meaning of these words to the phrase that is closest and the most accurate in meaning, and complete the sentences below.

1. ENERGY
a) something that you feel
b) it makes people and things move, and do work
c) a spiritual force
provides the energy your leg muscles need in order to
ride your bicycle. The provides the energy needed to pro-
duce food.
2. ENERGY CONSERVATION
a) to save energy by using it efficiently and avoiding waste
b) to be stingy with energy
c) to stop using energy
You can conserve energy by switching off the when they are
not required, by using a instead of an incandescent lamp, and
by using ato heat water.
3. FOSSIL
a) an old fogey
b) a layered pile
c) the remains of plants and animals that died long ago
and are called fossil fuels.
4. RESOURCE
a) stock or supply that can be drawn on
b) the origin of things
c) to re-examine the source
and are renewable sources of
energy.
5. SOLAR ENERGY
a) energy that is sold free
b) energy from the sun
c) energy that is available during the day
You can use a to cook your food, a to distill
water, and to make electricity.
water, and to make electricity. My mother uses the sun's energy for clothes.
The potter uses the sun's energy for his pots.
Plants use the sun's energy for making their food in a process
alled

In many parts of the world, solar cooking enthusiasts make their own solar cookers from cardboard and other simple materials. You too can make a solar cooker on your own and have great fun. Here's how-just follow these simple instructions carefully and surprise your family and friends with a solar treat. This is the smallest of the solar cookers and the simplest to make. Of course, its only an experimental cooker as it can cook just a few things such as rice, vegetables, dal or roast peanuts or bake a small cake. It can reach a temperature of 95-

You will need

can use it twice.

* An empty fruit or any other cardboard carton (250 cm x 250 cm x 100 cm in size). You can get one from your fruit vendor or chemist.

100°C, and in summer you

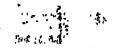
* 26G MS (Mild Steel) sheet about 275 cm x 22.5 cm for use inside the carton as the main supporting tray. If this is not easily available, you could use your mother's baking tray, or make one from hard cardboard instead.

The Marie and the second of the second of the second

- Plain transparent glass about 3 mm thick and 25 cm x 25 cm in size.
- * Black paint—150 gms or 1 small tin (Standard blackboard paint will do.)
- * Hay—small quantity for use as insulating material inside the cooker.
 - * Small painting brush.
- * Small flat-bottomed container with a tight fitting lid. (A standard small aluminum lunch-box would be ideal).

Assembly

- 1. Arrange the carton so that it is open at the top.
- 2. Trim the four corners of the MS sheet, and fold the edges to make it like a tray, its length and breadth matching the inner dimensions of the carton.
- 3. Paint the metal tray with a coat of quick-drying blackboard paint, or any other variety of black paint to give it a matt finish. If you are using your mother's baking tray paint it black, likewise. The tray should not be much smaller than your carton, or else you will have to obtain a carton to match the size of the tray you are using. If you are using a tray made of stiff cardboard then paint it black too.
- 4. Half fill the carton with hay.
- 5. Place your black tray above the have so that its upper edges are of the same height with the upper edges of the carton. Ensure that the plain glass fits well above the tray and inside the carton.
- 6. Paint the lid and outer sides of your lunch



box also matt black.

- 7. Your solar cooker is now ready for use.
- 8. Place the ingredients in your lunch box, cover container, close the lid and place it in the Solar Cooker for an hour.

Open the lid and bake for another hour. Garnish with nuts and serve chilled.

Glue two pieces of orange or yellow card paper together. Cut out a sun with a centre hole just big enough to fit around your face without you holding it.

Cut two identical sun shapes out of yellow card paper. Glue the two suns together leaving an unglued sleeve at the bottom that is large anough to insert half the length of a small ruler or puncil, or a stick. Colour a sun face on one or both expesed sides. Keep the puppet in a book and just insert a pencil or ruler when ready to use.

DAY AND NIGHT

The sun shines brightly.
So much light.
Why does he go away at night?
And not stay to play with the moon and the stars?

One evening I watched him go down,
down into the sea.

Can he swim under water?

Another time, at eventide.

He just disappeared behind the mountain line.

Was it already his bedtime?
Come evening, a big orange ball,
Harkening to the birds' goodnight call
He hastens to his home beyond.
Does he live behind the sky?
He never waits to answer why?
I asked his friend, the sunflower if she
knew where he went.
"My dear," she said, "watch the shadows
cast by ligh
and discover the secret of the night."
"The sun, so far far in space
does not move from his place.

does not move from his place.
It is the Earth that moves all the while turning to, and away from his smile."
From darkness to light, a perfect rhythm of Day and Night.
Our friends who live on the other side

Our friends who live on the other side Get their share of light, when we have night.

Now, I know of the Sun's secret flight 'cause we have day when they have night.



Cats and the Sun



CAT sunning himself in the doorway of a barn knows all about solar energy.

Why can't man learn? says E.B. White.

Cats love the sun. They have been closely associated with it since time began

Some people think cats invented the sun. Modern science has been unable to prove this theory. Then again, modern science has been just as unable to explain gravity.

If cats can prove they invented the sun, some fear those little furry beasts may claim patent rights and impose a stiff tariff on human solar use. If cats impose such a tariff they will undoubtedly run into great resistance as most courts and juries are packed with people or at least non-cats. Furthermore, cats are notoriously poor lawyers and have historically failed in such legal crusades.

It is well-known that cats were worshipped in ancient Egypt. No doubt the Egyptians recognised how perfectly cats interact with their environment and glorified them appro-

the head of the cat.

Quite obviously the Egyptians recognised the close connection between cats and the sun.

This Egyptian Period

and was portrayed with

This Egyptian Period witnessed tremendous growth of solar knowledge by cats. During this period cats discovered thermal mass. (Thermal mass is anything that holds heat and especially things which hold a lot of heat).

Cats discover how the overwhelming thermal mass or heat storage capacity of the pyramids provides unchanging cool relief from the scorching desert environment.

Even after the decline of Egypt, cats continued to advance in their ability to use the sun, though at times their progress was slow. They travelled by boat to Europe where their solar research activity was rs pered Many Day cat-hatil of the Mi and arream nomans forced cats to stay outside where they became experts at chasing mice and rats for survival and entertainment, Although



priately. In ancient
Egyptian art the goddess
Bast represented the lifegiving heat of the sun
CHILDREN'S WORLD MAY 1993

European winters were very cold, cats had by then learned how to use the sun to stay warm, and thus survived this era of persecution. By the early eighteenth century cats had regained human favour, having eliminated the rats who carried the Black Plague throughout Europe.

At the onset of the industrial revolution cats were much more highly regarded, but with cheap and plentiful coal it seemed hardly worth the effort to study such a seemingly weak energy source as cats using the sun. Being basically messy, people preferred filthy coal to a lead to be solar case.

This rest has seen people shall live coal to oil as their primary energy source. This change from messiness to sliminess has long been viewed as a natural progression to be followed by a gradual shift to nuclear power.

Unfortunately (or fortunately) nuclear energy cannot be developed as quickly as once thought. Concern for human health and welfare will not permit the rapid growth of nuclear power without

extreme caution.

A great shift to energy sources that are renewable in the short term (primarily solar energy) has now begun. With centuries of solar experience behind them, cats are certain to play an important role in this "Great Solar Transition".

Extracted from the Solar Cat Book by Jim Augustyn, Ten Speed Press, Berkeley, California. This is a delightfully funny book from which you can learn some of the principles and applications of solar energy, but you have to discern fantasy from reality first.

Energy Dictionary

Answers

- 1. b: it makes people and things move and do work. Food, sun.
- 2. a: to save energy by using it efficiently and avoiding waste. Lights, fluoroscent, solar water heater.
- 3. c: the remains of plants and animals that died long ago. Coal, oil, natural gas.
- 4. a: stock or supply that can be drawn on. Sun, wind, biomass, water.
- 5. b : energy from the sun. Solar cooker, solar still, solar photovoltaic cells, drying, baking, photosynthesis.

Kalyanpura. Where the SUL MANYET

Situated near the dairy town of Anand in Gujarat, Kalyanpura was a tiny, nondescript village till a few years ago. A handful of houses, a primary school, a small flour mill, a tiny grocer's shop and a well comprised the village. No electricity, no streetlights, no post office, no watertaps, no doorstep bus service existed. But not anymore.

Kalyanpura is now an important landinark on the Solar Energy map of India, a willage where the sun shipes went at night. Rows of sun colis blinking in the sun in its open square have transformed this village. These sun cells, known as solar photovoltaic cells, catch the sunrays and make electricity from sunlight. Every home in Kalyanpura now has light at night, a light that gets its energy from sunlight. Some homes even boast of solar fans. The village streets are no longer dark, as streetlights

twinkle brightly with the light produced from sunlight.



The village also has a solar community television set that gets its power from sunshine. The solar electricity made by the 'sun cells power plant' illuminates 106 home lights, and 16 streetlights for nearly 8 hours each night. This small solar electricity plant, known as the solar photovoltaic power pack, has been established with technical and financial assistance from the state and the central government. It is managed by local village youth, responsible for its day-to-day running.

In addition, the village has a solar hot water system which provides hot water for the primary health centre. Also, some families have now started using solar cookers CHILDREN'S WORLD MAY 1993

to cook their meals. Kalyanpura not only gets its energy from the sun, it uses other local energy sources as well which are considered as waste by most of us. Some families now cook with biogas. It is made from cow dung. Others use an improved smokeless chulha which consumes less wood, and makes the kitchen smoke-free. Biogas plants and improved chulhas save precious firewood, and also provide a more comfortable cooking environment for the women. The village also saves scarce and expensive diesel with its new pump, which is operated by a gasifier engine that runs on wood-gas, a gas produced by burning small pieces of wood and some diesel.

Solar and other renewable energy sources have not only transformed the lives of the residents of Kalyanpura, they have brought a ray of hope as well. The village now proposes to set up a dairy co-operative, and various small-scale industries with the renewable sun-energy sources that it has just begun to harness. It can truly be said of Kalyanpura that it makes hay while the sun shines!

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Circulation & Advertisements A.J. Joseph C.P. Ravindran

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Subscription Rates

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(Postfree by surface mail)

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...DEAR READERS

DEAR EDITOR.

Recently, in the vacation, I had the privilege of visiting some of the ancient temples in and around Madras. It is a matter of extreme regret that even the educated people in the city do not seem to take interest in these temples, some of them, though small, are like museums with valuable records. If they had done so, they would have removed a number of eyesores, and set right several defects which could be remedied easily Unfortunately, that is not the matter of fact. But, why are we so unconcerned and unaware about our national heritage, about our golden past and about our rare architecture of exquisite elegance? Why are we waiting for the hentage to be destroyed and then lament and feel sorry for it? Why are we waiting for them to be ruined and then think of taking steps to protect them So this colossal Why has to be answered by restoring the temples and monuments to their former grandeur and glory.

> Manish Somani (15), Midnapur

The earliest memories of Independence Day celebrations go back to a twilight zone of childhood that hovers between clear photographic evidence and intangible, fragmented, fleeting images in the remote areas of the mind There was always this vast map of the nation in the background on the stage and a youthful, zestful. full-of-pride-at-being-thechosen-one-vision in white holding aloft the tri-colour before it, while other visions in white sang a patriotic song with full-throated pleasure. This much is clear What is not clear is the confusion over why Bharat was Mata Wes the reference to Shakuntala. Bharat's mother? No. of course not. With added years came the wisdom of Mother Earth. Mother Nation of Janani janama bhumishch, and the searing pride one felt, the swelling of the heart at the sound of the national anthem The repeated rendering of the ringing words, brought back that image of Mother Nation. as a proud woman holding up the flag-truly making one feel that Janani janama bhumishch Swargat te gariyete.

How comfortably the Indian woman, our mothers, our Ranis of Jhansi and others of their ilk became exchangeable images for Mother Nation—

and little wonder too Take the trail and ailing Madam Bhikaijee Cama's resilience and commitment to the cause of treedom.—A length of cloth she was painting as a pastime, she made into the symbol of Indian freedom. And what's more, got the delegates of the World Socialist Congress in 1907 to salute it too! What better way of saluting the flag this year on August 15, than recalling how it was born?

In our trip 'around the world' we visit Indonesia this month, which celebrates its National Day on August 17 Our cover pays tribute to the great art form Batik, that Indonesia is said to have contributed to the world Everybody is familiar with this painting technique in which hot wax is applied to cloth and then dyed to get this unique criss-cross pattern in the background of even the most complicated and eye-catching main design.

The delightful folktale A Woman's Wit as retold by Shankar is recalled in this issue in full colour comics, to make for a special Independence Day treat.

Happy reading
Indulge your patriotic
feelings and be good to
someone, somewhere this
August 15.



money poured into the tin bowl at the end of an act. On his master's death, Salim inherited the bowl and the shabby rug. For some time the trade went on very well. Without his aged master, Salim could move about more frequently and he put his best into the juggling spoons, knives and balls and performing simple magic. He could even make noises imitating all sorts of animals. His favourite performance was walking on the tight rope between two poles carrying a child from the audience, on his shoulders. He would

Story: Vinita Agarwal Illustrations: Subir Roy

THEACISOBAT

ALIM was an acrobat and he performed on the beaches and crowded streets of Bombay. He was good. You have to be good if your living depends on performing tricks before an audience. Their whims and fancies decide how much one would earn. Ten years ago, when Salim performed with his master. from whom he had learnt the trade, people still had the time and interest to enjoy tricks on the pavement. Lots of

performances. He earned enough to see him through the rainy days when people did not come out of their houses to see a pour acrobat perform. He thought of new tricks every day. But now, even when it did not rain, very few people came to watch his show and even fewer threw in money. Salim performed till he was tired and his legs shook from sheer exhaustion. The children were very happy and laughed and clapped to see him perform simple tricks like

pretend to lose his balance and then go on as the audience gasped.

Salim had never been to school. Ever since he could remember he was on the streets performing, or learning acrobatics. With time his skills improved but the money became lesser and lesser.

During one rainy season, Salim's money was all finished. He was very hungry. No one would give him work and there wasn't much he could do anyway. He could not beg. He was

CHILDREN'S WORLD AUGUST 1993

proud of being an acrobat and acrobate did not beg. For three days he did not have a morsel to eat or a roof to shelter him from the rain. Tired and hungry he lay down in a drain pipe. When he woke, he found his legs were too weak to get up and his body was hot with fever. It was here that some priests of a local temple found him. At first they hesitated in bringing him to the temple, but the head priest decided that Salim should be placed in the small hut near the temple. The priests took good care of him. They gave him clothes and food and nursed him till he was well. Much as he liked staying there, Salim knew it was time to go. He had acrobatics to perform for a living and he enjoyed his work. It was decided that Salim should leave soon after the Ganesh puja which was a week away.

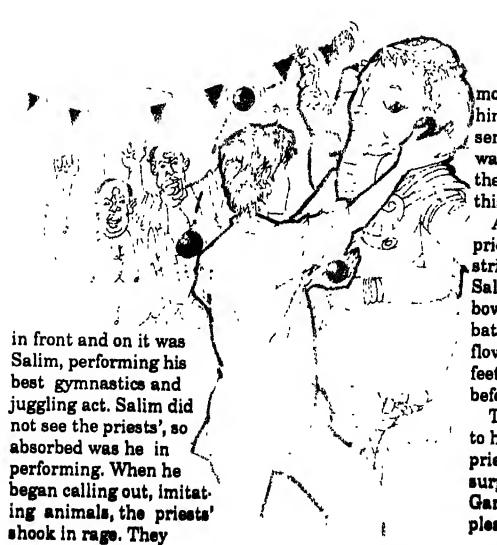
From his hut Salim watched the preparations for the puja. He felt light at heart. He had often seen the idol of the deity from the bottom of the steps. Though he never dared to go inside, he always felt that Ganesha the lord, watched

him and smiled. 'Ganesha loves me especially,' he said to himself.

As the day of the puja drew nearer, all the priests were busy working for the lord. Some wrote verses, others painted, and carved images of him and still others sung his praises. Salim was completely left out. He could not read, write, sing or paint. He wished with all his heart that he too could do something. At night he tossed about in his sleep. In his dreams he heard Lod Ganesha calling him.

On the morning of the puja, the priests got up before sunrise, bathed and went to the inner shrine. As they entered, they were suprised to see a tattered rug in front of the idol. The tin bowl lay

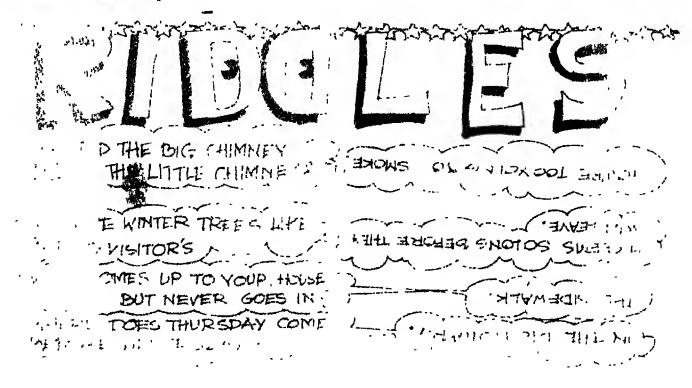




moved in a block to hit him and bring him to his senses. To them, Salim was making a mockery of the sacred temple, and on this particular day.

As soon as the head priest lifted his hand to strike Salim, he saw Salim finish his act and bow to the deity as acrobats do to an audience. A flower at lord Ganesha's feet fell into the tin bowl before Salim.

The priest's hand fell to his side. The other priests gazed on in surprise and joy. Lord Ganesha was obviously pleased with Salim's act.



The Birth of the Indian Flag

Text and photograph: Dr. N.M. Khilnani



ADAM Bikhaijee Cama stayed in a nursing home in Carlovary (erstwhile Czechoslovakia) and there, to divert her mind, CHILDREN'S WORLD AUGUST 1993

she started painting a large scarf with three colours. In August 1907

she attended the World Socialist Congress at Stuttgart (Germany) where on the second day of the Conference, on a sudden impulse she took out her handiwork, cloth painted with three colours, from her ladieshandbag and said in flamboyant tones, ringing with emotion: "Ladies and Gentlemen, arise to salute and greet the flag of Indian Independence. Behold, the flag is born. It is already soaked and sanctioned with the blood of martyred youth of Mother India". Such was the hypnotic effect of her declaration that the entire audience (which

included many members of the Diplomatic Corps) rose, bowed and greeted this so-called flag. The whole hall echoed with cries of "Long Live India". The effect of this brief speech of Madame Cama was electric. Even the representative of the British Embassy was impressed.

On the third day, encouraged by the fervent response of the Socialist International, she moved the resolution of Indian Independence, which inter alia said: "The continuance of British rule in India is positively

disastrous to the best interests of all Indians. All lovers of Freedom, all over the world ought to cooperate in freeing one-fifth of the human race inhabiting that oppressed country".

Thus was born the flag of Free India in 1907, which was smuggled into India along with the records of the Revolutionary patriots by Shri Indulal Yajnik in 1936. On August 18, 1937 (exactly thirty years after World Socialist Congress at Stuttgart on August 18, 1907), Vir Savarkar, unveiled this flag and later on it was taken out in a procession at Poona.

Le & Calldhood

Here I go again.
Releasing the anger and sadness
That have burned as bright as the flames
Did that day.
I lost my childhood
And aged ten years in the six hours
That I sifted through ashes,
Looking for treasures
And only finding the remains.
But I think, that really,
I was searching for lost hopes and dreams
Now colored grey,
Loke the trees,
Casting their shadows,
After night has fallen.

Shannon Kay Williams (13)
Singapore
(Courtesy SICC)

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NINDONESIAN TALE

Text: O.P. Bhagat Illustrations: Subir Roy

NCE there was a king. He had everything that a man could desire. But he was not happy, for he could not sleep.

All through the night he lay turning in his bed. He tried to sleep, but sleep would not come. His health began to fail.

His courtiers consulted many physicians. Each gave the king what he thought was the best and surest medicine. The king took every dose of it. But in vain.

Sick and tired as he was, the king felt bored with everything. One day, just to amuse himself, he decided to go out. He dressed like a common man and set forth.

He walked up to the woods nearby. The trees fascinated him and he rambled among them. It was so quiet and peaceful around. He liked it all the more.

Suddenly the king heard a sound. It came again - and again. He went further to see where it came from.

It was a woodcutter, wielding his axe. He

struck at the trunk of a tree repeatedly. Stripped to the waist as he was, his body glistened with sweat.

The man must be tired, the king thought. But the woodcutter went on with his work. He was too busy to look this way or that. He even did not know that the king was watching him.

While the king was looking, the tree fell on one side. The woodcutter sighed with relief. He wiped his body with a piece of dirty cloth and lay down to rest.

He was startled when he saw a man staring at him. Then he said, "I thought it was the supervisor. He does not like to see me resting."

"You work so hard,"
said the king. "Can you
sleep when you are
perspiring? And you do
not have a bed, not even a
mat to lie on."

"After working hard for long I need rest," said the woodcutter. "I fall asleep at once. Had I not to work long for a living, I would have slept on for a whole day and night."

The king found it interesting. He also felt sympathetic towards the poor man.

"But who are you?" asked the woodcutter. "Your clothes are neat and clean. The palms of your hand are soft. What are you doing here?"

The king did not tell him who he was. Instead he said, "Do you know that our king cannot sleep? He has not slept for days."

"I do not know that," replied the woodcutter. "But the king has the best of beds. He should have no difficulty in

getting sleep."

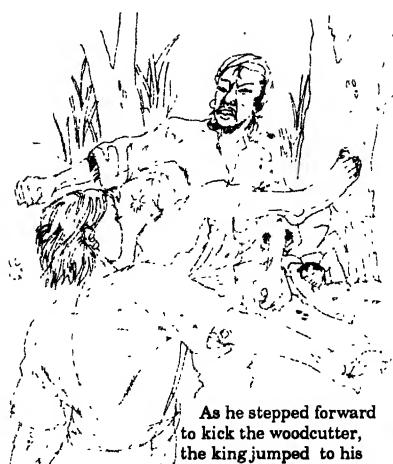
"Give me your axe,"
said the king. "While you
sleep, I shall cut down
another tree for you."

The woodcutter did not want a stranger to work in his place. If the supervisor found out, he would be angry with him. But the king insisted like a friend. He snatched the axe and began to strike at the trunk of a tree.

Tired after hours of work, the woodcutter slept off on the bare ground. The king went on axing the tree even though it hurt his hands.

By the time he had felled the tree, every part of the king's body ached. But he was happy with what he had done for the woodcutter. To soothe his limbs and back, he lay





down beside the woodcutter.

Sleep came over him in no time. But a man's shouts roused him. It must be the supervisor, for the man was swearing at the woodcutter for sleeping like a log.

"Do not shout," said the king. "The man is tired. Let him take some rest."

"Who are you to tell me that?" said the supervisor crossly. "I shall thrash him for not working."

feet. He gave the man a blow with his fist. The man staggered.

Though bullying, the supervisor was a coward at heart. He fled from there, saying, "I shall come again and teach you a lesson for hitting me."

Meanwhile, the servants noticed that the king was not in the palace. They looked for him in every room, but did not find him.

The matter was reported to the courtiers. They were panicstricken. They divided themselves into three or four parties and went in search of the king.

One of the groups made

for the woods. As it reached there, a man was coming out.

"Have you seen the king?" asked the courtiers.

"King? No," said the man—he was the supervisor. "But there is a mad man over there who seems to think that he is the king."

The courtiers exchanged glances. They asked the man to lead them there. Hoping that the courtiers would punish the man, the supervisor was glad to be their guide.

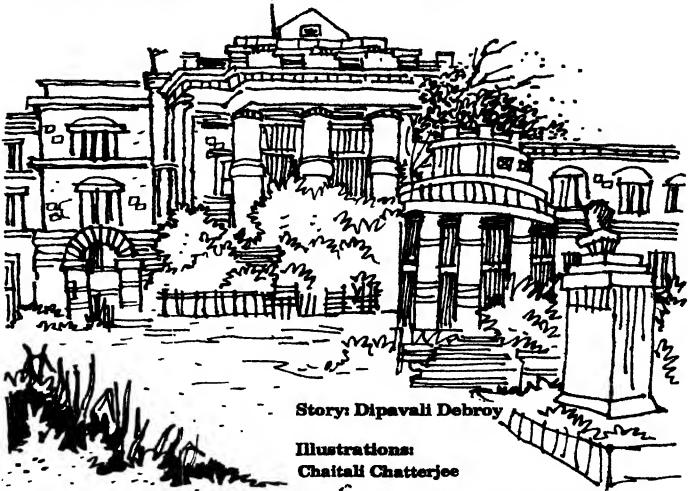
But he got the shock of his life when the courtiers bowed low before the ordinary-looking man. He had been rude to no less a person than the ruler of the land!

"This man—the woodcutter," said the king, "is very tired. Carry him to the palace without disturbing his sleep. Lay him on a soft bed. When he wakes up, give him the nicest food to eat."

The courtiers were surprised at the strange orders. But theirs was not to reason why.

"The man," added the king, "has found me the medicine for my sickness. I shall be able to sleep now."

The Inheritance



HEY had not always been this poor, Bablu had been hearing ever since he was a child. A few generations earlier, their family had been the richest in the area. Their decaying mansion stood witness to that.

But that ancestral home was now No Entry for Bablu. He lived in a small hut in its sprawling compound. This had been

erected by his grandfather, Alok Roy. Even that hut his father Bibhuti, found difficult to keep well-thatched and plastered.

Bablu had lost his mother when he was two. His father's sister stayed with them and looked after them. She still told him stories at bedtime. Bablu's favourite was the story of their family inheritance.

His grandfather's grandfather, Anadi Roy, was a stern and overbearing personality, somewhat of a tyrant. His son Ballav Roy ran away from home when he was but an youth. It was rumoured that he had become a wandering mendicant.

Anadi Roy had been left alone with the vast property he had. People in the village advised him

to spend it on charity and welfare projects like setting up a school in the village and digging a new well. But Anadi Roy was a miser. He had no intention of giving his property away. Besides, he retained a belief that his son would come back and once more take his place in the family. The son did not have Anadi Roy's firmness of character. He would come crawling home one day, and take possession of the ancestral property and live on it. It was with this fixed idea in mind that Anadi Roy had been clinging to his assets till the end of his days.

And the prodigal son had in the end returned. But long after his father's death. The family mansion had then started to crumble into ruins. Its walls had cracked and tiny ashwattha trees had started to grow in the crevices. The smoothly paved courtyard was rife with an overgrowth of nettles and grass.

Ballav Roy had given up the idea of being a sannyasi long back. He had married and settled down in a distant village where nobody knew him. He had tried his hand at various things, but had failed in all of them. He had lost

his wife and his health.
Then he had come back,
dragging his feet, tired
and penniless. With him
had been his motherless
son.

Ballav Roy had a shock waiting for him. He had searched high and low. but could not find a trace of the riches his father was known to have piled up for him. A few family heirlooms, the antique furniture, the brass and copper, that was all. The house had stood empty forlong years after Anadi Roy's death. Had some thief come and emptied it of all that it had held? Had the villagers themselves denuded it?

Ballav Roy was disappointed but he had no energy left to go away and try his luck elsewhere again. He pined to his death there itself, and after his death, his son too continued to live there. Only, because the ancestral house was crumbling to pieces, and was difficult to maintain, he shifted to a hut erected in the very same compound.

As his aunt told him this family history, Bablu had often thought to himself, 'If I could get just one bit of all that inheritance, I would at least have been able to go in for CHILDRENS WORLD AUGUST 1993

higher studies.' He wanted to be a doctor. But how could he even dream of that, in the straits that the family now was in?

In fact, poverty had forced them to sell off many of the family heirlooms like gilt-edged mirrors and decorated bedsteads. Bablu, who was now fourteen, felt that he ought to do something to help the situation. Should he try to get a job in the village as the grocer's assistant?

Bablu was deep in such thoughts when an un-known man blocked his way. A city man, in jeans, slinging a fat shoulderbag. Must have come down from Calcutta.

"I am looking for a place to say in. I am new to the village as you can see. The grocer in that cornershep told me that you have a huge house lying empty. Can you put me up there? I won't haggle over therent."

Bablu took him to his father. His aunt objected at first. She did not think it was either safe or honourable to let out the ruirs of their family seat. Why, the place was crawling with snakes and scorpons. But in the end she gave in. The rent would definitely help to run the family, she realised.

Bablu took a fancy to the gentleman, Ramesh Bose by name. He had always a friendly greeting for Bablu, and soon his aunt too began to like him for his pleasant, homely Ways.

As arranged, Ramesh Bose took his meals with them at night. His purpose in coming to this village was, as he said, to write a book in peace and quiet. He was writing a novel on rural Bengal and needed to be actually in village surroundings.

One night Bablu's aunt was serving the family their humble dinner of rice, pulses and vegetable. Ramesh Bose came for his share. "What is that on your elbows? So much mud," said Bablu's aunt. Yes. Bablu saw that there was a lot of mud on his elbow's, even though the hands had been obviously

A couple of days later, Bablu again saw caked mud and scratches on Ramesh Bose's hands. And that was a perfectly dry day.

Another time, getting up in the middle of the night for a glass of water. Bablu's eyes happened to fall on the mansion looming in the dark outside his window. Ramesh Bose had a light burning in his room, he saw.

It was only next morning that it struck him that the room which had had the light had not been Ramesh Bose's room at all. The room rented out was on the first floor, while the light had been glimmering at the groundlevel, near the courtyard.

Bablu was wondering if he should talk to his aunt about this, when an event of sorts occurred.

roads and stopped mext to their house. A few kids gathered round, wondering at the car. A prosperous-looking gentleman got down and went inside to talk to Bablu's father.

"No, Sir, please do not ask me to sell my ancestral house. I can't do it." his father could be heard saying, mildly at first, and then angrily.

"Think it over. I will come again."

The car sidled out with great difficulty and was gone.

His father mentioned it to Ramesh Bose that night at dinner. He was startled and said, "What, is that rascal here already?"

His aunt immediately pounced on Ramesh Bose. "Do you know him? How?"

Ramesh Bose did not know what to say. He



just kept on muttering to himself, "Here already."

When his father too began to press him, he got up and went away, his food unfinished. He did not show up the whole of next day. The food kept for him had to be thrown away. When he failed to make his appearance next day as well, Bablu's aunt sent Bablu to fetch him.

As it was normally out of bounds for Bablu. he felt uncanny entering the mansion. It was silent. The only signs of life were the leaves sprouting from cracks and corners, and the grass and moss covering the grounds. At the corner of the courtyard, there wound up a staircase to the first floor. Right at its bottom, at that corner of the courtyard, what was it that lay in a heap?

The boy's screams brought the whole village there. The cause of deal was clearly snake-bits The neighbours helped Bablus father to call village doctor, who sald the same. They foraged through Ramesh Bose's papers and found a diary with the names and addresses of some friends. They were informed and tock charge of the further proceedings. It turned out that Ramesh Bose had

had no near relatvies. By night, the body was cremated and the friends left for Calcutta again. Of course, not before they had accused Bablu's father of sending Ramesh Bose to his death. The building was clearly snake-infested and not fit for human habitation. It was criminal to rent it out, they shouted as they left.

Bablu, still under shock, hung around the building, despite his aunt's warnings. A few days later, he entered it again, without anyone's knowledge.

It was equally silent, but there was no terrible heap at the foot of the staircase. So Bablu climbed up to Ramesh Bose's room. It was bare except for the bedstead Ramesh Bose. No, there was a spade and an iron rod as well, under the bed. Also a candle, half-burnt.

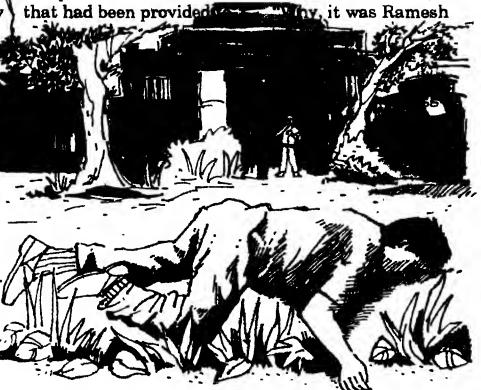
Bablu bent over and examined them. They were muddy and seemed to have been used recently. But what could Ramesh Bose have been doing with them?

A shadow fell across the door. The gentleman who had wanted to buy their house, stood at the threshold.

Bablu felt a cold chill of fear. What was he doing here? How had he come in?

"You are Bablu, aren't you?" he smiled in a sickly sweet way.

"How do you know my name? What do you nt?"



who had told me."
"But did you know Raymesh Bose? How?"

"He wrote, you know, for the films. He was a script-writer. And I am a film-producer. That is how we know each other."

"But how -- "

"Patience," said the gentleman, smiling coldly. Ramesh Bose was writing his latest piece in this village and had told him of its idyllic setting, he said. He had told this gentleman of the old mansion where he was putting up. For, he had felt it would be a wonderful location for shooting.

"My name is Jaswant Rungta and apart from producing films, I am a businessman. I want to buy this picturesque house and rent it out to film units for shooting their films in.

"This is why I went to your father that day. Ramesh had known that I would. Perhaps he had not known the precise day."

All the while Jaswant Rungta had been speaking, Bablu had been sidling towards the door. He wanted to go past Rungta who stood ominously blocking the way. But as soon as he tried, Rungta caught him in a

vice-like grip,

"My dear Bablu, where are you running off to? A better idea would be to do what I ask you to do.

Persuade your father to sell me this house."

"Never, it is our family home", said Bablu, twisting and turning.

"Look, I know al**l about** the state your family is in. I made my own enquiries. I also know that you are a bright boy who would like to study further rather than work in the village grocery. The grocer himself told me how he had offered to take you in and you were not all that thrilled. So why don't you just accept my offer? You will get enough to see you through your medical or engineering course, and your aunt will never have to scrimp again."

"But what is so special about our house that you are prepared to pay so much? Two villages away, there is another very like this. Many villages have mansions erected by old zamindars which are now in ruins. Why are you so set on ours?"

"Look kid, you are trying my patience. Do as I say, and don't ask any further questions." Bablu made another lunge towards the stairs. But
Rungta held him fast.
There was a scuffle, and
Rungta overpowered
Bablu. He dragged the boy
away from the door towards the bed, and in a
sudden move picked up
the iron rod lying under
it. Bablu felt a heavy blow
at the back of his neck,
and fainted.

It was much, much later that he opened his eyes again. Moaning, he reached the door. It was fastened from outside. He banged on it and heard Rungta speak from outside.

"Take your time, Bablu. Think it over in peace. I am leaving you alone so that you can really think it over," he hissed from beyond the door. "And remember, the snake that had bitten Ramesh Bose must be somewhere around. Maybe very near you. It had not be**e**n killed, had it? And in any case the house is crawling over with snakes. Maybe that thought will help you make your decision faster."

In rising panic, Bablu looked out of the window on the opposite wall. It overlooked a tangle of bushes and shrubs, then a stretch of fallow land, and then merged into the

village cremation grounds. The hut that Bablu lived in was at the other side of the mansion. It could not be seen from this window.

It was so awkwardly far away, that his screams would not reach either.

But wouldn't his aunt come looking for him? Why should she, at least so soon? There were mai afternoons when he wa away from home, fishi or just passing the time the day with his friend Even when his absence. would begin to be felt. they would not think of looking here at first. His aunt had so often told him not to come this side! that it would not easily occur to her that Bablu could have disobeyed.

He began to feel thirsty and with every step his head swum. He had been hit quite hard. Was he going to lose consciousness again? What was the time anyway? How long had he been left there?

Suddenly Bablu saw a face at the window. He looked on helplessly, so terrified that he could not even scream. But in a few seconds he realised that this was not the face of a villain come to finish him off.

It was the face of a boy

roughly his own age someone he knew, not from this village, but definitely the face of some simple village lad. Dark, with a huge red sindoor mark on the forehead, two red hibiscus flowers stuck in the ears, and a hibiscus garland on the scrawny neck as well.

He looked keenly into Bablu's face and immediately Bablu felt self-conscious about the mole on his upper lip. This was a feature that had run in the family for generations, an inheritance like the mansion he was standing in.

into Bablu's face and by a strange trick, vaulted in through the bars. He was desperately thin. His ribcage stood out and the bones could be exactly counted. He wore a red dhoti and that was all.

He looked very surprised to see Bablu there, but also seemed very glad.

He grinned at Bablu and as Bablu smiled back, he came closer and looked at his clothes with open admiration. He seemed very impressed with them, though they were just ordinary shirts and shorts, not even new or colourful.



'There are so many people poorer than us,' thought Bablu with a pang. He gestured (he did not know why he gestured instead of speaking), do you want them?

Yes, nodded the boy eagerly.

A little later, it was
Bablu who stood clad in
the red dhoti and the boy
in shorts and shirts. In
spite of his predicament,
a smile came to Bablu's
lips.

The boy now gestured towards the floor, where the mud-encrusted rod lay. Pick it up, he seemed to suggest. Bablu did so. The boy pointed at the mud and the few blades of grass sticking to it. Again and again he did so. As though he wanted to impress something on Bablu.

Suddenly there were footsteps outside. The boy vanished through the window immediately.

"So Bablu, have you changed your mind? In any case, I am going to win, you know. So why resist?"

"No, you are not," Bablu shouted from inside the room.

"No? I am going to get you removed to Calcutta, and then I am going to ask for this house in ransom. Do you think that even then I am not going to win? Come on, I want your answer," said Rungta finally. He opened the door and came in.

"Why, what happened to your clothes?" he asked as he advanced towards Bablu. "What's this?" and he lunged at Bablu's dhoti.

Hiss. The black cobra stood between them, its hood erect. Where had it sprung from? Where had it been hidden all this while?

Bablu froze stiff. But Rungta made the mistake of turning round and running. Lightning-like, the cobra followed him. There was the sound of Rungta trying to run down the stairs, a halfscream, and a thud after that.

Now Bablu too rushed out through the open door. There at the foot of the stairs lay Rungta in a heap, and the snake poised in attack. Before Bablu's eyes. It bit the already dead man once more, and then, slithered away into the grass that covered the courtyard.

In a daze, Bablu followed it to the spot.

He was carrying the he realised, and

started poking the grass with it. It was downright dangerous, he knew, but somehow, without thinking, he went on doing it.

Suddenly his rod hit something metallic. A round piece of some metal sunk into the pavement of the courtvard. completely hidden by the weeds around it. Bablu fiddled with it and it came out. It was a cylindrical container, which had been cleverly fitted into a hole in the courtvard. He tinkered with it. It came open. An vellowed paper fell out of it. A letter written long ago.

My very own son,

You could not bear the blows I dealt you, and ran away. But I have been bearing your blows all these years. In the belief that, as in the story a Christian missionary had once told me, you would one day return.

The family wealth is all yours. I am sure you will need it. But the villagers here cannot be trusted with its safekeeping. Nor can I leave it at the mercy of thieves and robbers. So I have made my own arrangements.

The flagstones paving the courtyard are loose in this corner. Thrust something through the hole where the container of this letter used to be. Give it a wrench and a pull. It will come up. So will a few others around it. You will find stairs leading below. Go down them and you will get your inheritance.

I had that secret chamber made and then got it paved over. I then fitted the metal container in myself and planted grass and weeds in the crannies around the flagstone so that it would not catch the sunlight and attract attention. The only man who knew about the

secret chamber was the ailing mason who made it for me. He died very peacefully the very night he completed it. I had given him some brandy laced with poison.

The secret is only with me and so I put it in this container for you to discover. I hope you will be astute enough for that.

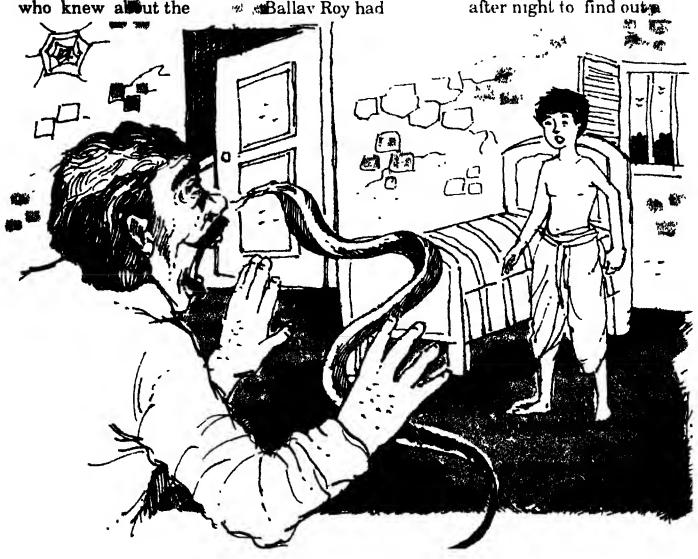
But, one never knows, and I have made further arrangements."

Here Bablu paused.
The mystery of Ramesh
Bose's death was becoming clear to him.

searched the whole house, but he had never thought of clearing the grass and examining the courtyard for any secrets it might contain. He had died in poverty and his family had continued to live in poverty.

Somehow, Ramesh Bose must have sensed that the courtyard was hollow here. His heavysoled town shoes must have caught some sound that the bare feet of people here had missed.

With rod and spade, he must have tried night after night to find out-





flagstone which was loose and could be lifted. He had made friends in the village and they must have told him about the possibility of treasure here.

. He must have told Rungta about his secret adventures, and mighteven have sought his help. It might have been arranged that once the treasure was actually found by Ramesh, Rungta would come and buy the whole house up so as to have some legal claims on the buried property.

But Rungta had been too impatient and had wanted to pre-empt Ramesh. He had arrived on the scene before Ramesh expected him to, and that must have alerted Ramesh that he had to hurry up. He must have worked desperately that night, poking and

prodding here and there, careless in his urgency.
The snake, disturbed, must have —

But had it been quite like that? Bablu now went through the rest of the letter.

"I caught hold of a vagabond lad hanging around the village. A homeless waif. Dumb, into the bargain. I made a yakh of him. I hope you know what that is.

"A yakh is the short form of the word yaksha. The yakshas are short, fat treatures supposed to be servants of Kubera, the god of wealth. In ancient indian literature, they have been described as guards of Kubera's treasury. I am leaving my treasury to one such yakh, no less.

"How did I get hold of one? My dear son, one does not get hold of a yakh, one makes one's own. I knew of certain rituals, and I made my own particular yakh.

"As I said, I lured a dumb, runaway kid here. I made him bathe, dress himself in a red dhoti and then took him downstairs to the room where all my wealth had been removed earlier. I followed certain rituals, decking him up in hibiscus flowers and chanting certain mantras. I had learnt them from a sadhu long ago.

"I placed a thali of laddus before him and a basket with a cover. I then climbed up and placed the tiles so as to seal the underground chamber. It was absolutely airtight, as it was required to be. In its airless interior the boy would begin to choke.

He would thrash around in his agony, disturb the cobra inside the basket. and get bitten. That would complete my rituals and the boy would be transformed into a yaksha. He would stay there guarding the treasure and assume the form of a snake whenever someone came to steal the treasure. someone other than you or your descendants, that is. To you, or your descendants, he would be cooperative. That was what the mantras had been for.

"But how would he know? How would he distinguish between fortune-hunters and rightful claimants? You see, my son, I have told him about the mole we bear on our faces. That is not going to disappear in one generation or two. It is going to run in the family for a long, long time. The yaksha will go by that.

"I end here now with all my affection. But, mind you, I still think you deserved all the beatings I ever gave you."

The letter was signed Anadi Roy.

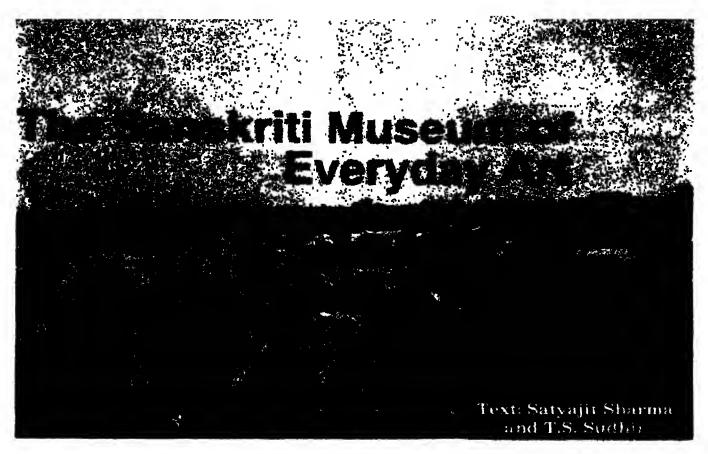
Trembling, Bablu
peeped down the hole.
There were stairs leading
down. As his eyes adjusted
to the darkness there, he

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also saw the gleam of brass vessels, and sprawled near them, as if in the throes of death, a small skeleton.

But what clothes were those on the skeleton's back? And here Bablu lost control and screamed. For they were his own shirt and shorts.

Years later, Bablu returned to the village as a highly-qualified doctor with foreign qualifications. The mansion was renovated and converted into a hospital, a charitable one for wayfaring and homeless ones. Bablu had patients thronging to him from the whole district. In their queue, he sometimes glimpsed a dark face with a red tika and hibiscus flowers in the ears. Lurking among the patients, it broke into a grin whenever the doctor caught its eyes, and then vanished.



All art is but an imitation of nature

- Seneca

One touch of nature makes the whole world kin

- Shakespeare

HE GUIDE at the **Qutab Minar** wasn't too impressed when asked for directions to Anand Gram. "See the Qutab, saab. What is there to see at the museum?"

Nevertheless, 9 kms past Qutab-din-Aibak's minaret on the Mehrauli road, we stepped into Sanskriti Museum, located in Anand Gram. Work was going on at a frenetic pace at the Metal Museum while the gardeners were

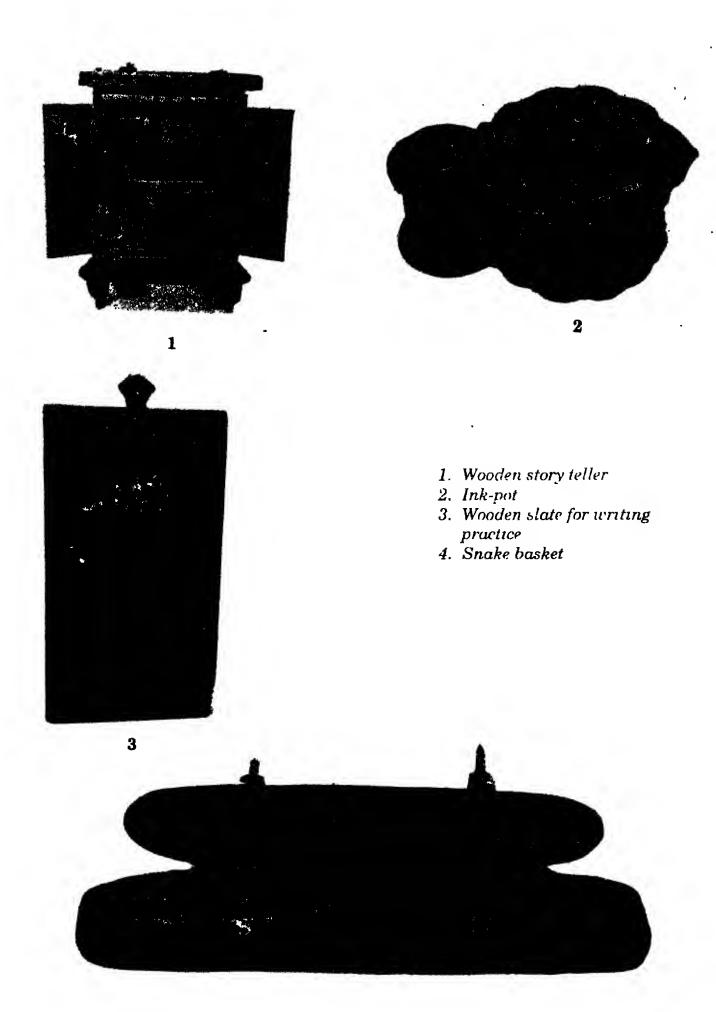
busy laying the grass. The Terracotta Museum. however, is ready and all set to welcome any visitor to its precincts.

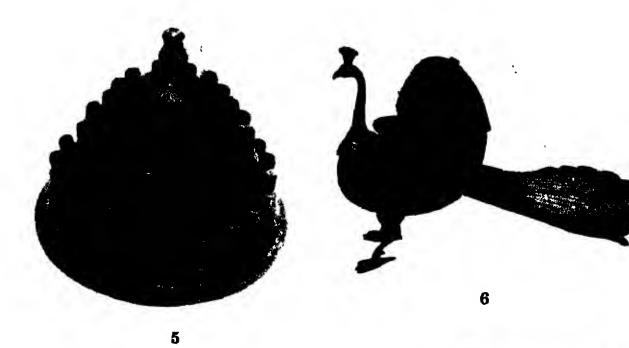
Sanskriti means literally 'the process of cultivating'. The museum has been established by the Sanskriti Pratishthan, a registered public charitable trust. It was founded in 1979 out of a concern for endangered Indian traditions as well as to help nurture some of the most emotional elements of Indian cultural heritage'.

The atmosphere at the museum complex is quiet and serene. In sharp contrast to the hustlebustle of the metropolis. you are transported to a world of open and semi-

open courtyards, dotted with as many as 2000 trees and little ponds filled with sprinkling water. Further ahead in such dream-like environs one can explore figures and accessories ranging from anything between a common earthen pot and giant-sized equestrian figures of the rural Tamil deities of the Avvanur cult. You could see folk and tribal sacred images, ritual figures, traditional writing material, weights and measures, ovens and tongs, locks and latches: with simple but extremely attractive patterns etched on them.

The terracotta museum has a well documented display of India's



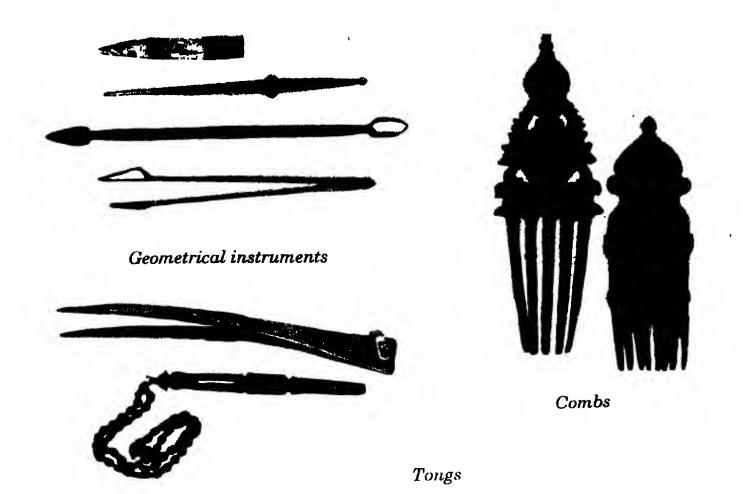


- 5. Incense stand
- 6. Betel leaves container (Paan-daan)
- 7. Portable coal stove
- 8. Spoon hanger



7





terracotta tradition. The idea behind setting up the museum was that the finest craftspersons from all across the country could come to the museum to come and work there. The Sanskriti Kendra recently invited the practitioners of terracotta art to Delhi for a camp so that they could build figures and accessories for the museum. Artists have come from all over the country and therefore each state has now been allotted a separate section. At the residential facilities as well as the working space

provided for them, visitors can also see them at work and interact with them.

Many of these sections also carry fine examples of mural paintings. A special gallery also has been installed to provide a historical perspective to the long tradition of terracotta art.

The metal section comprises the personal collections of Mr. Om Prakash Jain, the president of the Sanskriti Pratishthan. But this section would take at least another two months before it is open

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to the public.

Unfortunately, for most Delhiites and visitors to this city, the city ends with the Qutab. That perhaps explained the absence of any visitors at the museum. One only hopes that once the metal museum gets its finishing touches, the complex will spring to life relating the exquisite history of a glorious era gone by.

As we stepped out of the complex, we wondered if we ever knew that history could be so interesting.



Story: Manish Sharma (17)

Illustrations:

Deepak Harichandan

S the golden rays of the sun touched the earth, the blanket of darkness slowly began to disappear. The sky had turned orangish blue. Flowers had blossomed after a long sleep and the chirping of birds had filled the silent morning air. A new day, enchanting and majestic, had dawned.

Rehana was sleeping peacefully in her room. She suddenly woke up with a start. Her face had become pale and her heart was beating very fast.

It was the sound of an

aeroplane that had awakened her. She started crying. How could she ever forget that it was a plane that had torn her happiness to shreds?

Seven years back, Rehana was returning to India, with her sister Juhi and parents. She had been living in Canada since her birth and to see India would be a new experience for her. She was very excited to think that she would now be living in her parents' motherland!

She was sitting with her sister. They were

laughing, telling each other jokes and generally making merry.

It was then that that disastrous thing happened. "Attention please!" came the voice of the air hostess. "One of the wings of the plane has caught fire. We're going to make an emergency..."

Even before the air hostess could complete her sentence, the plane suddenly started rolling in the air. The passengers started screaming. The plane was moving steadily downwards. Death seemed immensely near!

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Rehana clasped her sister. Her face became pale. Being a small girl, she was unable to bear any thing, and fairled.

When Rehams came in her sense and was in a hospital. She was one of the seven passes who had survived. Rehama's parents and her sister had left her forever.

Rehana had only one relative, her mother's brother, who limed in Bombay. She had been living with him from then.

But, Rehana, with all her heart and soul thought that it would have been better if she too had died. For all these years, only she knew how she bore all the insults that now and then came her way. Her cousins were always teasing her about something or the other. They had nicknamed her Lady Rickshaw Puller.

Rehana's heart ached when she saw that while her cousins wore expensive dresses, she had only her cousins worn out dresses to wear. Her future seemed a vaccum. She did not know what she would do in life.

Rehana came out of her tangled yarn of memories. The whole day passed gloomily. In the after-

noon, her Mama, Mami and cousins went to attend a family function. She was all alone!

Rehana stood at her reams window, peeping out. It was her habit to stand there and look out for a long time.

A van came and stopped near her house. On the van was written in bold letters The Orphan Help Society.

An old, graceful man came out and holding a mike in his hand, started speaking, My team and I are the representatives of the Orphan Help Society. As you all know, there are millions of children who have no parents, no guardian to look after them. We try to bring light into their lives. We hope that all of you would contribute in some way or the other in bringing a little bit of joy to their lives."

Listening to this, Rehana's heart leapt with joy! Whether anyone would or not, she would surely help those children. She knew, that 'her' heart could understand 'their' pain.

She began searching for something worthy of contribution. She had no money. She opened her almirah. Alas! She had nothing to contribute.

Then, she felt the chain hanging from her neck.
The necklace was of pure gold! Her father had presented it to her on her sixth birthday. To her it was a priceless possession. No matter how much her cousins tried to take it away, she had never parted with it.

Rehana knew that she only had that necklace which she could contribute. She took off the chain and held it in her hands. She was trapped in a dilemma. One part of her heart said - "Give it. It's only a piece of metal. What would it do hanging around your neck. But it can help a lot of orphans." But suddenly, the other part of her heart spoke -"Keep it. Are you a fool? Have you forgotten how valuable it is to vou?"

Rehana looked outside. There were many people near the van. They were contributing something or the other. Rehana was still unable to decide what to do with the necklace. Just then, she saw an old woman. Rehana knew who she was. She was a beggar. Rehana had seen her many times.

The woman's face was extremely pale and wrinkled and her clothes nad decayed to shreds. Still she contributed a five rupee note.

Rehana was filled with remorse! Shame on her! She was werse than that beggar! Selfish and unthinking!

Without losing a moment, Rehana took the necklace and came out of the house. She locked the front door and ran towards the van.

"Yes, my child! Do you want to contribute anything?" the old man who was collecting whatever the people were contributing, asked her.

"Yes, this," she replied,

holding out the necklace.

"This! Do you really want to give it? Think well, my daughter," the old man looked at her with surprise.

"Yes, it's mine. Of no use to me, but maybe you could use it for a good cause. It was given to me by my parents, who are dead. But I know they will be proud of me. I need no ones permission to give this away."

The old man smiled and patted her. "Well done, my child. May God bless you and your soul be filled with love."

Rehana was very

happy. She had never been so happy in life. All these years, she had worn the necklace hadn't given her so much joy, than that one moment when she had parted with it.

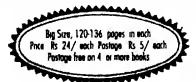
Rehana suddenly realised she had seen the guiding light! She would, after proper education, join an institution that helped the disabled and the deserted. She would try to be Florence Nightingale in her own way.

She started walking back home—happy and contented. It had been the happiest day of her life.



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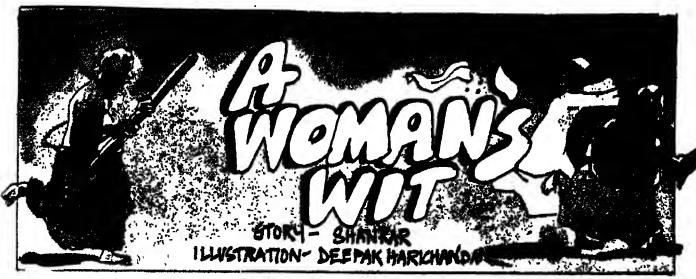
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VISHNU POTTI WAS A PRIEST IN A TEMPLE IN KERALA . HE LIVED. WITH. HIS WIFE , LAXMI IN A SMALL HOUSE

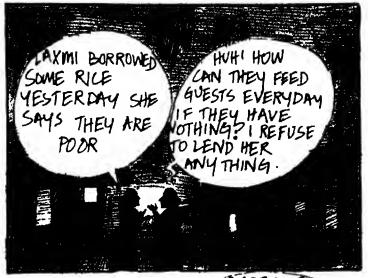


ON ANOTHER DAY





TWO NEIGHBOURS IN DISCUSSION



ONE NIGHT AS VISHNU POTTI IS PREPARING TO SLEEP







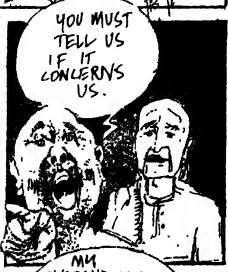


NEXT AFTERNOON VISHNU POTTI BRINGS HOME A COUPLE OF STRANGERS AGAIN SEEING THEM COMING LAXMI GET'S AN IDEA.

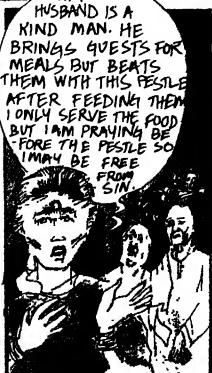












TUESTS RUN AWAY, SCARED.









WORD SPREAD ABOUT VISHNU POTTI'S STRANGE HABIT. NO ONE CAME TO EAT WITH HIMANY MORE AND LAXMI DID NOT GO HUNGRY EVER AGAIN (END).

Hindustani Music

Text: Subhra Mazumdai

Illustrations: Deepak Harichandan

The forest is the home of the tiger and other wild beasts. That is what most of us would say if we are asked who lives in a forest. I'm sure verv few of us would even remember that forests in the olden days were places where great saints used to live. They would set up ashrams in which young boys were sent to live and study with the guru. Besides studying, these young students also had to perform certain rituals or observances according to the rules laid down in the Vedas. The study period consisted of chanting verses from the holy Vedas and other texts and these were sung to a fixed tune known as Hymnal chants. Of course, no student learns to sing lessons any more and no one knows just how these chants were sung. But what is important today is the fact that this chanting in the guru's ashram was the beginning of our music in India,

Before long, these students began to sing the chants to a tune and a beat and they termed their new kind of singing Prabandha or arranged music. Unfortunately, we do not know how this music sounded, for there are no people who sing it



any more and there are no written records of this music. But we do know it was different from the earlier chant, because it had a tune to which the words had to be sung and there was a fixed beat or laya to it. Today, we have a very old form of music that is still sung and performed on the stage and which came directly

after the prabandha.
This is called Dhrupad and many people sing and hear this music today.

The singing and learning of the dhrupad was a serious matter for the students of the guru's ashram in the old days. It was not fun-time singing but needed to be sung during morning and evening prayers. So dhrupad was all about the gods. The songs were about the beauty of the gods, their heroic deeds, their divine teachings and the tales of the Puranas and the other scriptures. Instead of just singing on any one subiect the students at the ashram could choose to sing a dhrupad on any of the given themes and music was also made joyful by making dhrupad singing an art.

This music soon became popular among the students of the olden days because it had certain rules according to which it was sung. First of all, the words of the song had to

be fitted into a twelvebeat cycle, which was called chautal. Then, each song had four parts known as the sthayi, followed by the antara and the abhog and finally. the sanchari. Each singer had to follow this rule of singing and no one was allowed to sing the parts in any other order. After the song or bandish as it is called, was sung once. the singers could divide the words by doubling, trebling and even singing it four times the pace of the song. In this game of fast singing, they had to make sure that they were always back on time at the sam or the first beat of the chautal. This kind of division and singing needed a lot of practice and pupils spent their whole life learning this beautiful music. Even today, there is one great

family of musicians known as the Dagars, who spend their entire life singing dhrupads. They have been singing such bandishes for twenty generations!

Soon the fame of this new form of music spread to other places. Among the students at the guru's ashram were princes and sons of noblemen and they also learnt this sort of singing. Besides, there were now rich and powerful kings ruling the country and they wanted great singers to perform at their courts. One such music loving emperor was Akbar. He appointed a famous musician as one of the Nine Gems of his court. This man was Tansen and till today. this great musician is respected as the father of Indian music throughout the country. Not only was he a great singer, Tansen was also a great composer. In his days, Tansen wrote several bandishes and even made new ragas. Musicians of his family after him are called musicians of the Senia gharana or of the house (Ghar) of Sen.

Some of you may well ask how we are sure of the songs and melodies composed at that time

were actually written and sung by Tansen himself. The ancients in our country had devised a novel way of being remembered, long after they were dead. In the verses that Tansen had written, he included his own name as part of the lyric so that every bandish written by him, in the end contains the line Kahen mivan Tansen... which tells us definitely. that the number was composed by that mastermind of music. In the case of melodies, he had a clever way of letting people know that he had written it. He added the word Miyan before the raga or melody. Thus he composed a melody for the rains and called it Miyan Malhar. Another one by him, which is sung early morning, is called Miyanki-Todi and so on. It thus became a tradition or practice for musicians to include their names in this unique way and teach pupils to sing their numbers not by making them write it out in an exercise book but by repeating the song after them so that they learnt it straight from the guru's mouth. This method of learning and teaching is still followed



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by music teachers of today and the system is known as the gurushishya parampara. The fact that no one writes down the lessons on paper but learns it through memorising It is called the oral tradition of learning music.

When kings began taking such a keen interest in music there was bound to be some change in the style of music itself. We all know that when anything becomes popular, not only do lots of people begin to follow the fashion but newer styles and designs are brought out in the new style. The same thing happened to music as well. The old dhrupad form now was beginning to change for another form of music. Kings who had begun to have musicians in their courts after the fashion of Emperor Akbar, wanted to be entertained to music by them. Besides the dhrupad was not always suitable for singing at court, for it was to be sung at puja time, in the guru's ashram. The new form of music suited the dazzle and glitter of court life and was called khayal. The word means idea or mood, and the



singer sang this khayal just as he liked to sing it, according to his khayal or idea.

Since this new music of the time was not for singing as prayer, many of the composers began to write bandishes in praise of the seasons, or the king or light-hearted things like romance or a lady waiting for the return of her beloved. Many of the new songs were not entirely without some religious idea as they were songs of the love of the gopis for Lord Krishna. The lyrics were about the lord playing with the gopis on the banks of the river Yamuna and the beautiful groves of Brindavan where the Lord dwelt. They also sang about Mother Yashoda and the child Krishna. Now one may well ask that it is

one thing to have ideas but how does one sing out those ideas? The old style of the dhrupad would not do any more for such subjects and besides the new singers had wanted to change from the old order. They sang the khayal in many other beats and not just the chautal at all. The favourite form was the Teental and the Ektal of sixteen and twelve beats respectively. Instead of having four parts to the song, it now consisted of just two parts—the sthai and the antara. Instead of doing doubling and trebling they now began to sing out patterns of notes in fast rhythm known as taans. So, the khayal singer sang the bandish in several different ways and then introduced taans and syllable patterns known as bol taans to beautify this singing and making it very interesting.

Yet there were certain rules to be followed. The khaval first of all had to be set to a raga or melody. In fact, a raga can be compared to rules that one has to follow while playing any game. Before the start of a game a player is free to make any move he likes but he

must make his moves according to the rules of the game. When people go to watch a game like football or hockey for instance, the rules of the game are not explained to the spectators. It is expected that they know and can follow the match.

Similarly in a khayal or any other Indian music recital the raga is the rule of the performance and listeners are expected to guess which raga is being sung for them. Thus the khayal singer tries to use his idea of singing to make clear and unique his form of presenting a raga through the words of his song. The more experienced the musician the better is his skill at this art. Every raga uses a few definite notes of the music scale and the khayal is composed around the notes of that raga. The singer must stick to those notes only and make up his taans, bols and anything else he likes, within the rules or notes of that raga. With so much challenge given in singing, it is no wonder that till today, the khayal is the most popular choice of singing in Indian music. But musicians at the court could not have kept

on singing khayals forever. The need for a new kind of music was soon felt. This time round. several poets had found favour in the courts of noblemen and they wanted their verses sung by famous singers. Then there was a lot of pomp and show at court and music was needed to sing of these gay moods of love, meeting of the beloved and the charm of nature on a moonlit night or the beauty of the rains. The new music was the thumri which was purely romantic in nature. Instead of the court of the Mughal king at Delhi, this new form of music began at Lucknow, where the Nawab Wajid Alı Shah was a great patron of the thumri.



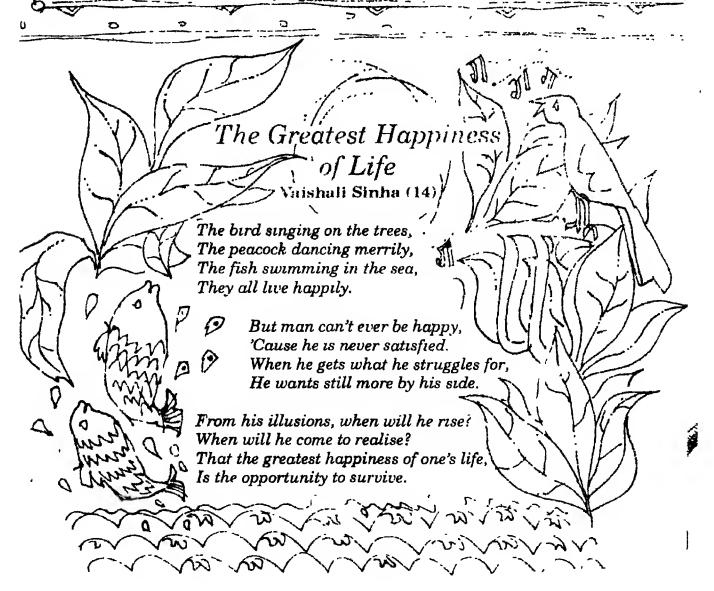
around Lucknow a great tradition of singing and writing lyrics. These were written in Brajs Bhasha, spoken by the villagers of his kingdom. There were also songs sung when the harvest was sown and when it was ready for cutting. The poets of the nawab's court heard these beautiful numbers of the simple villagers and included these words and subjects in their own poetry. Thus the new thumri was written in Brai Bhasha and sang of subjects like the beauties of spring in the month of Chaith and known as Chaiti. They also sang the Kajri about harvest time. Since the words of this new song were very important, the singers began to make music by singing phrases or single words of the song in many forms. Such music became the chief method of singing the thumri and was known as bol baant (division of words) or making up of words. The raga was not so important any more and many a time musicians combined more than one raga in making up a thumri number. What they had to remember in this music was to sing each word in

expressed sorrow or anxiety or jey then the tone of the singing must convey the feeling or bhava of that word. The thumri was sung by many famous musicians. Many of them were women singers who were invited to sing at court by nawabs. Some of them

Calcutta and Bembay and people came from all over the country to listen to them. These singers sang at music conferences arranged by the town people and the public came to listen to them. Many times they even sang over the radio and everyone could listen in.

The gramophone record was made in 1902 and again people bought records of their music and listened to them, over and over again. Some of the famous singers of thumris were Gauhar, Janaki Bai Allahabadi and many others.

Next month: The Ghazal



NCE towards the end of my summer holidays, when I was young, I spent a few days with my cousins in their village.

In those days, I was a keen shikari and used to rove the countryside for hunting, or, to be more precise, to shoot birds.

Dipak and Pradip, my two cousins, were very glad to see me and the gun in my hand.

"Would you like to go picnicking, Rajatda?" asked Dipak, joyfully. "Our neighbouring village Jhikargachi is an ideal spot for picnickers."

"And you'll find a host of birds there for shooting," added Pradip, enthusiastically.

So the next day, the three of us set out for the village. Our path went through a vast expanse of fields. "Look ahead, Rajatda!" said Dipak, pointing at a short distance. "That outline of green is the village Jhikargachi."

We walked across the fields. A few men were working in the fields. A cultivator was ploughing the land. A young boy was cutting grass with a scythe. A very young girl was looking after the cattle, grazing content-



Story: Sukhendu Dutta Illustrations : Hemant Puri

edly in the fields. The men, the young boy, the girl—all of them stopped their work, staring at the unusual spectacle of the three of us with a gun!

As we approached the village, we were greeted by the twittering and chirping of birds. Soon we reached Jhikargachi. It was a tiny village with a cluster of hay-topped huts, surrounded by

bamboo groves, palm and coconut trees.

We started walking along the winding paths of the village with the gun slung over my shoulder. The mango, guava and jack-fruit trees were a pleasing sight to me, a city dweller. The tall trees and green bushes made the village lush green and offered homes to a host of birds. Pendant shaped

babui-nests swung from robust palm tress. Some birds had built their homes in the hollows of the big trees.

Birds were darting from tree to tree, fluttering their wings. Partridges were swiftly taking cover in the bushes. The ring doves, usually in pairs and the most quarrelsome of all the birds, were coming down on the ground to feed on grains, pulses and seeds of grass.

The quaint little village stole my heart. Kapotakshi, a small winding river, flowed softly from one end of the village to the other, bathing the feet of the stout coconut trees which lined its side. Kapotakshi—the eye of a pigeon—what a beautiful name!

I fell in love with
Jhikargachi. The picturesque village, with its
lovely ponds, neatly
thatched huts, green trees
and winding paths covered with dried leaves,
was a haven of peace,
so different from our
busy city life. It was hard
to believe that such a
village still exists in our
country and that too not
far from the din and
bustle of our city.

We walked along the narrow village paths shaded by the trees and bagged half-a-dozen doves and partridges in an hour. The grey-pigeons were highly arboreal, seldom descending on the ground. Even then, we shot a few of them. A very good achievement indeed!

Every now and then my gun had been breaking the midday stillness of the village by its fiery shots.

So engrossed were we in our game that we had not noticed a gang of boys, barely out of their teens, following us. They were looking at us with hostile eyes. I could see unhappiness writ large on their faces.

In summer the sun does not want to set. The day being sultry, we were sweating profusely. We approached a pond to sit down under a tree to enjoy the shade and the soft cool breeze. My gun was in my hand and Dipak was carrying the birds, upside down. As I looked up, my eyes met with a piercing look coming from a fraillooking dwarfish figure, with a shining head as hairless as a potato. The man was smoking a hookah. His icy look went from my face to the dead birds and rested on me again.

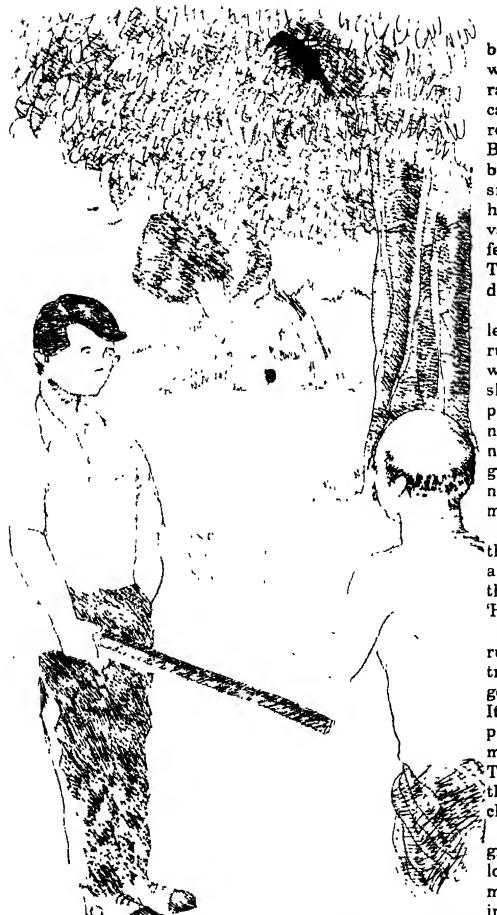
I began to feel uneasy. There were two other men beside him—one a bespectacled, bearded man and the other a grey-haired one. Both of them were looking at us with their eyebrows arched.

"The fowlers," said the frail-looking bald man, puffing his hookah. The other two nodded their heads.

At that moment, a dove, high up in a leafy mango tree, began calling in a soft mellow tune, 'Kroo-kroo-kroo!' Another bird was responding to its call from a nearby tree, 'Kroo-kroo!'

I forgot all about the three men, my hands unconsciously going to my gun. How daring the bird was! The duet continued even when I, with my loaded gun, was near it. One lead bullet would be enough for the audacious duet singers.

But the bird was hidden in the green leaves. I stood up and took a few steps back. Yes, now I could see its head. But a sitting bird was difficult to shoot. I stepped back further to get a better view of it. Now its neck.



body and even the tail was within my sight. I raised my gun and took careful aim at the bird, ready to pull the trigger. But my concentration was broken by the hookah smoking man. Putting his hookah down, he advanced and stopped a few feet away from me. To watch the shooting no doubt!

In doing so, dried leaves and twigs had rustled under his feet. I was annoyed. The slightest noise would panic the bird. Moreover, nobody should come so near a hunter. I had the gun in my hand and needed freedom of movement.

Nevertheless, ignoring the man. I took a second aim only to stop short as the old man shouted, 'Hey, don't shoot the bird!'

Just then there was the rustling of leaves in the tree above. The bird had got wind of our presence. It rose into the air flapping its wings, and, to my dismay, flew away. The old man looked at the flying bird with a childlike grin.

I looked at him with a grim look, beginning to lose my temper. The old man's eyebrows now knit into a big frown: "You've

got enough game to provide a handsome picnic lunch for all three of you," said he. "Then why do you want to kill more?"

I was taken aback. But only for a few moments. 'Do I have to give an explanation before shooting birds?' asked I, sarcastically.

The old man gave me a freezing look. There was an uncomfortable silence. The bearded man now approached me. He gave a little cough, cleared his throat and broke the silence. "It's not a question of explanation, boys!" he said. 'Is it fair to kill birds at this time of the year?"

"Why?" I looked at him in surprise.

"The summer is the most delightful time for the birds," said he, softly. "During this time, they start making their nests and having families. Even in the hot weather they work from dawn to dusk, to nest, breed and rear their young."

"Is it not cruel to kill the birds while they're sitting on their eggs or caring for their young?" asked the grey-haired man.

I bit my lip and was visibly embarrassed. Yes, I had also seen the birds hurrying to and fro, carrying dry twigs and grass pieces in their bills.

"The birds carol most beautifully at this time of the year," said the bearded man. "They sing with joy all day long."

"And their melodious song gives pleasure to us throughout the day. They're so harmless, innocent and friendly!" said the grey-haired man.

"They are very busy now, feeding their hungry babies," said the bald old man, quietly. "Shots from your gun will panic them. They may desert our village and leave their young ones to starve!"

We looked at each other and after a moment's thought, I lowered my gun. On seeing this, the bald old man beamed a toothless smile. He shook his head approvingly and his rounded bald head glimmered in the sun. The grey-haired man also smiled and so did the bearded man, running his hand through his beard.

The village boys were still behind us. I looked at them and slowly uncocked my gun. The boys looked at me with their disbelieving eyes. Soon their wizened faces broke into huge smiles, knowing that the birds of their village were safe now!

I looked at the happy eyes of the old man and the beaming boys. Jhikargachi was a poor little village. The old men and the boys, bare-foot and hardly clothed, were perhaps among the poorest of the poor in our country. They were probably illiterate too. Yet, the rustic villagers had taught us something which we had never learnt. How they love and care for their birds! They made me hang my head in shame.

"Let's go back, Dipak!" said I, quietly.

The sun was setting among the palmyra and coconut trees of the village. I looked back at the villagers, smiled and waved at them. They too waved at us. The chirping and whistling of the birds began all over again behind us.

MUSEUMS

With Children in Mind

Deryk James (Courtesy: British Information Services)

HILDREN from all over Britain were involved in the research and development phases of a new museum called Eureka!, which was officially opened in Halifax, Yorkshire, northern England, during 1992. Designed to enlighten children between the ages of five and 12 about the world in which we live, the museum encourages children to touch, listen and even smell, as well as look.

Children's views were clearly of great assistance to the planners. A "living and working together" project investigates how the individual fits into the life of the family and society in general. Located around a "town square", a group of buildings includes a house, shop, bank, garage, factory and—sign of the times—a recycling centre.

An "inventing and creating" project lets children use their imagination and share their skills and knowledge to

tackle topical problems. There are several other intriguing projects. Many major companies have contributed, together with Government departments, to funding and developing Eureka!

Hands-On Activity

The venture is typical of a new generation of museums with children in mind, which take full account of the multi-ethnic nature of modern British society, and show both how communities are interdependent and how values can differ between cultures.

There is plenty of opportunity for hands-on activity, whether holding an axe used by someone in the Bronze Age, working on a steam engine, or wearing a costume from the past and recreating the life of other times.

The largest museum of science and industry to be built in Britain for nearly half a century is to be found in central England at Snibston, Leicestershire. Enticingly called

"The World of Discovery", it has been created on the site of a colliery where the pioneering engineers George and Robert Stephenson sank their first mine shaft in 1832.

Many varieties of human inventions are covered, from giant steam engines to type-writers. Children are encouraged to pull handles, press knobs, work pedals, employ windpower—in fact engage in all manner of activity designed to focus thought on the environment and on how man copes with the world around him.

Large exhibits, some based on conventional play equipment, are used to help young visitors explore the principles of sound, energy and motion. An "impossible" bicycle, a roller switchback, a giant vertical wave, a sound "mirror", magic sticks and other wonders are not merely fun to try out, they are also cleverly instructive to inquiring

young minds.

A "Science Alive!"
gallery at Snibston has
been developed within
the framework of British
school examinations
criteria, with the added
aim of making science
accessible and exciting.

Pirates Exhibition

The National Maritime Museum at Greenwich, London, has long been of outstanding interest to specialists concerned with naval history and the sea but it now also makes special efforts to provide something for younger visitors.

This year there has been a lively "Pirates—Fact and Fiction" exhibition, with a live "pirate" to tell the tale of those rumbustious days. Displays of genuine historical interest have been combined with lively presentations guaranteed to appeal to children, who have been able to dress up and play a part.

Chatham, an hour's drive southeast of London, was for hundreds of years the home of a dockyard supreme in Britain's island history. Some of the Royal Navy's most famous ships were built there, including Nelson's "Victory".

The extensive dockyard

area is now run by a trust, with 47 of the buildings classified as historic monuments. Within this complex, eight museum galleries have been created to show how Britain's great ships were built and to tell of the lives of the craftsmen whose skills, from carpentry and caulking to rigging and forging, made the fleet so formidable. One exhibition features the building of a ship in the year 1758, and the story is told through the eyes of a young apprentice of the period.

Realistic lifesize animated models are used in providing a fascinating experience for any young visitor—and there are plenty of them! Many school parties visit the dockyard, which has won top awards. Special events for children this year have included "The dockyard in steam" and a model railway exhibition. Information packs are provided in advance for teachers wishing to plan visits with their pupils. (See photograph on Cover III

Museums of Childhood

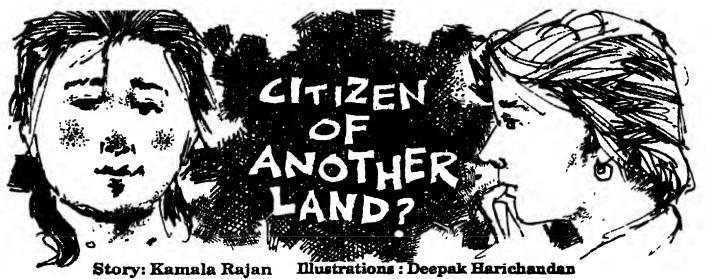
In Edinburgh, the Scottish capital, there is now a Museum of Childhood, a veritable

treasure house, with an; international collection of toys and games of as much interest to today's youngsters as they were to be the generation for which they were made.

In the South Wales market town of Abergavenny, an old building has been converted into a museum of childhood. It contains dozens of dolls, teddy bears, clockwork toys and games.

Another fascinating doll and toy museum is to be found in Stratfordupon-Avon, Warwickshire, in the very street where William Shakespeare was born.

In the north of England, in Country Durham, is Beamish, an open-air "living history" museum, which includes a colliery, cottages, a farm, recreated Victorian shops and pub, and historic transport. Recently, it has added to its attractions a village school decked out as it would have been a hundred years ago. The classroom furniture, scholastic equipment and toys all fit that period. Today's children can sit in the classrooms and think themselves back in the days of their great-grandparents.



Story: Kamala Rajan Illustrations: Deepak Harichandar
HE ten, ninth that one must be consid-

standard girls
from Breeks
Memorial School, Ootacamund were excited as
the train approached
Bombay. They were
selected to represent their
school at the annual
inter-school festival.
There would be hosts of
girls from all over the
country. The Breeks girls
were to put up Karagam,
a south Indian dance
form.

All the girls chatted excitedly at the station. There was one girl however, who with hands folded across her chest looked around silently, scornfully and contemptuously. She was selected as the announcer for her school. The girls ignored her overbearing attitude for they knew Nikita, nicknamed Miss High and Mighty'. Nikita loved to hate her country, India. Often she'd angrily think



begging, the unruly behaviour of the town-bus drivers, the modest interests of her friends, et al. made her feel ashamed of her country. Often one would hear her tell her friends, "This is a lousy place and Indians are a lousy lot." Her friends gave up arguing with her because her feelings for her country were hard and cold and firm. She had vowed that some day she'd finish her education and go abroad which was so much more exciting and civil than India.

At the school hostel where all the girls were put up, the loud and continuous chatter drowned the pleas of the teachers for silence.
When the girls assembled for lunch at the mess, Nikita found herself seated beside a smiling Japanese girl. She

thought she was the right pal for her and befriended her.

"Hello," said Nikita with a twangy accent. "My name is Nikita. I am from Octy. And you?"

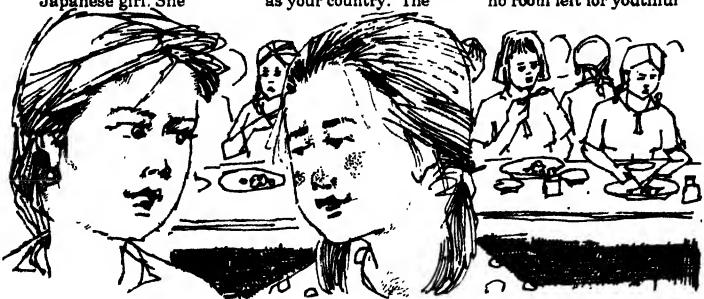
The flat-faced, straight-haired girl smiled broadly showing a perfect line of teeth. "My name is Chiufee. I am from Japan. I am a hostelite in Mount Hermon School, Darjeeling. My parents have always been fascinated by India. So they sent me here to study the country better."

"I don't think you'll find it all that interesting. It is a boring place..." said Nikita with her lips an inverted U in disapproval.

Chiufee interrupted her, "How can you say such a thing? You are fortunate to have India as your country. The people are so friendly and broad-minded. Do you know how it is in Japan?"

Nikita who was bracing herself up to counter the points in her usual raised-hackles way, found herself listening to the Japanese talk about her country.

"Almost everyone is busy working," Chiufee was saying in a soft voice. "We may have advanced industrially and may even be called a prosperous nation. But the price paid is of giving up one's individuality for work and more work. Old folks are entrusted to oldage homes as the accommodation problem is rather pressing. I go to see my grandma who misses home. In school too much stress is laid on studies while there is no room left for youthful



fun or one's extra curricular pursuits."

"But you have these computer games and such lovely parks and everyone is so polite," said Nikita quite startled to hear her preconceived notions of a foreign land topple.

"Ah," said Chiusee,
"That is correct up to a
point. But the human
touch is missing. Everyone is so mechanical."
After a pause, Chiusee
suddenly spoke passionately, "But I dearly love
my country, you know.
India will have my
respect and I'd be awed
by its opulent heritage.
But it is Japan I belong
to. I couldn't be a citizen
of another country!"

The words struck Nikita into a daze. She didn't even remember the meal of biryani. While exiting from the mess, those passionately uttered words of the Japanese girl, bored holes into her opaque disregard for India, her country. While she was imbibing valuable education in India. only to drain it in a foreign land, here was this stalwart who was studying here to return to

enrich her country!

It was many hours before she fell asleep. She realised how distorted her way of thinking had become. The meadow is greener on the other side always for the disgruntled lot. Chiufee's words humbled Nikita.

At the end of the festival which everyone enjoyed thoroughly, a bus was arranged to take the girls to the Elephanta caves.

"It will be a place of rocks," commented Nikita to Chiufee as they took their seats in the bus.

All the girls were dressed in their Sunday best.

When the bus started, Chiufee looked strangely at Nikita. "You seem to know very little of your country. The Elephanta caves have this large carving from a single rock which symbolises life."





Nikita blinked.

"This represents life," explained Chiufee. "The profile on the left is Brahma, the Creator, Vishnu, the preserver is in the centre and finally the profile on the right is of Shiva, the Destroyer. This epitomises Life."

Nikita found this profoundly interesting. But she blushed to the roots of her hair to hear all this from a foreigner! Surely she was not a citizen of another land to have been so scantily informed about her own country! At her very feet lay a treasury of culture and heritage. She had spurned it only to absurdly ape the west, losing an original identity.

They exchanged addresses when bidding a sad farewell. Chiufee had found a true friend while Nikita had realised her folly, reeling back to discover her true self. On the return journey, everyone was pleasantly surprised to see a humble and cheerful Nikita in place of the "Miss High and Mighty".

Nikita belonged to her place of birth and she smiled contentedly as the train sped into the gathering darkness.





Story: Cheryl Rao Illustrations: Viky Arya

SYNOPSIS

Naina and Rohan, who had expected to spend a boring six weeks with their grandparents, find their holiday is full of excitement. Old rooms, locked up by their grandmother yield interesting books and furniture. Wandering in the jungle leads them to discover a stolen idol. Just when life seems to become dull again, their cousins Pradeep and Micky arrive. The foursome discovers the possibility of a secret passage. Futher exploring leads them to a secret room and a diary...

Now read on...

CHAPTER V

HEN the children entered the secret room, Naina kept the door wedged open with the book, then followed the boys as they moved up the roughly cut stairs into the belly of the hill. "I can hardly breathe," she said.

"Then save your breath and don't talk," her brother said brusquely, "if you want to find where this leads to."

The steps ended abruptly and the children

climbed a sloping passageway until, what seemed like hours later, out of breath, they found themselves on a kind of ledge four feet across, overlooking a pool of water about ten feet below them. Micky flashed the torch around and up, then exclaimed, "I think it's a well, and we are halfway up the walls of it. See there's an opening up there and steps leading out. Come on, follow me!" and he made to start

CHILDREN'S WORLD AUGUST 1993

climbing the steps.

"You can't call those steps!" Naina exclaimed. "They are hardly a foot across! It'll be so easy to fall off them and go right down into the well—and we don't even know how deep the water is!"

"You go ahead of me," Rohan said. "I'll help you from the back."

"Listen, why don't both of you wait here?" Pradeep suggested. "Micky and I will go and see what the exit is like and then we'll come back."

"I want to climb, too," Rohan said, even as Naina agreed that to stay behind would be the safer course for her.

"Okay then," Micky said. "You come with me Rohan, and Pradeep can stay behind and shine the torch for us."

Pradeep wanted to protest but his little cousin slipped her hand into his trustingly and he couldn't say anything more. The two of them sat down cross-legged on the ledge and Pradeep kept the light in his lap, shining upwards for the two climbers. Within minutes they were out of the well, and then they called down. "The well has a kind of a slab half across it, that's why it's so dark below. Shine the torch around. Ah, we can see the ledge clearly now, but not the passage leading away from it! That's why it has stayed hidden for so long!"

"We'll walk back home from here so that we can fix the location of the well," Micky added. "Why don't you two turn back and go back down the passage and into the house?"

Pradeep snorted. "I'll bet they are nervous about coming DOWN



is easier. So now, they're pretending they want to find the way home. Come on Naina, let's go back."

He got up and held out his hand to her, swinging the torch around towards the passage. As he did so, Naina caught a glimpse of something in a crevice alongside the ledge. "What's that?" she cried, jumping in fright, thinking the dark object was a coiled up snake.

"Let me see," said Pradeep, and took the light closer, bending down to have a look. "It's a bag of some sort," he said, and

pulled out a dirty and grimy oilskin tied roughly with leather thongs. "Hold the light for me," he directed Naina, and she obliged, her hands trembling as she watched Pradeep empty the bag gingerly on the ledge.

"Coins!" they said together.

"They look like gold," said Naina.

"Come on, let's take them back with us. It was worth staying behind for



THIS, wasn't it?" asked Pradeep as he filled up the bag again and bent to enter the passage.

Naina and Pradeep were through the passage and secret room and inside the house, long before Micky and Rohan got back. They washed themselves and Pradeep hid the oilskin bag under his mattress, warning Naina not to say a word until the moment was right. By the time Rohan and Micky returned, accompanied by Rani who had bounded out to them as soon as she'd heard their voices in a distance, it was lunch time.

Rohan couldn't stop talking, and Micky let him, concentrating on his food instead and feeling very important for having been the brain behind the discovery.

"A secret room in our house?" said Grandpa. "What nonsense!"

"We'll show it to you, Grandpa," Naina cried. "Come on!"

And, as soon as lunch

was over the grown-ups were crowding into the second last room, watching in astonishment as the secret door sprung open and revealed the narrow space inside. They peered in and saw the other door, and Micky threw it open. "That's the staircase-or steps—since they are so rough," he said. "It goes up and then a slope goes up, up into the hillside and then opens out into a well on the other side of the hill. We climbed out of it and came back home around the hill."

"You mean you've been inside the hill?" Aunty Seema cried, while Grandma was too shocked to say anything. "Why you could have got bitten by snakes or something!"

"But nothing happened, Ma," Pradeep grinned.

"Yes, nothing happened," Micky echoed disappointedly. "We thought there'd be more to the secret room than just a passage and an exit."

"What more do you kids want?" asked Grandpa. Hasn't the excitement so far been adventure enough for you?"

"Well, we were not here when Rohan and Naina found the statue," Micky said ruefully. "If we'd found some treasure or something this secret passage would be worth it."

Pradeep laughed and disappeared for a moment. returning with the oilskin bag. He emptied the contents on the table, allowing the coins to tinkle down across the smooth wooden surface, as he said, "A treasure like this is what we had in mind, Grandpa." The amazed expression on Micky's and Rohan's faces was a comic sight and everyone laughed as Pradeep and Naina gave an account of their discovery. "It was Naina who saw it," Pradeep said modestly and Rohan glared enviously at his sister, wishing that he had not been so eager to prove himself and climb out of

the well.

"Well," said Uncle
Sushil, as he examined
the coins, "these are gold
guineas and they belong
in a museum. "We'll have
to give them to the Archaeological Department."

"Oh, Pa," groaned Micky, "you mean we don't get to keep them?"

"Of course not," Aunty Seema said. "The credit for the discovery will be yours but the coins won't. They belong to the Government of India—not to you!"

Despite that, the children were on a "high" of
excitement for the rest of
the day, going over and
led up to the golden find.
Pradeep went through the
entire journal before
handing it to his grandfa-

ther, but could not get any information of importance from it. The writer was an official of some sort, unpopular and afraid suddenly for his life in the aftermath of the Rising of 1857.

There was no clue to the source of the coins, nothing to say that they had even belonged to the same man who hid in the secret room and escaped through the well. "Let the historians figure it out," Pradeep said, as he gave up the diary into the adults safekeeping.

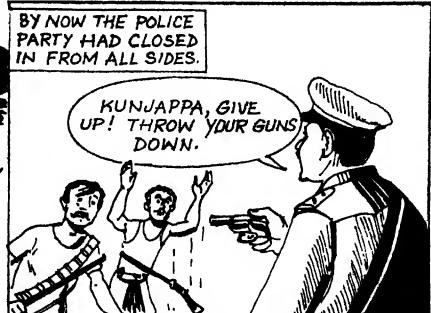
"Just a short while left," sighed Naina that night. "How much we have to tell Mummy when she comes to get us."

To be continued





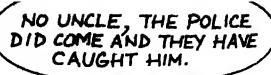
STORY : ALAKA SHANKAR ILLUS : B.G. VARMA











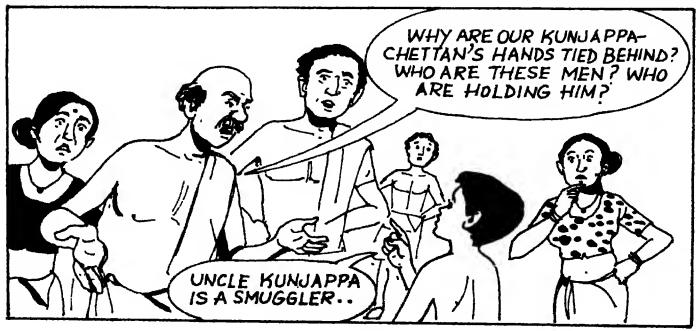
UNNI AND THE OTHER MEN LIFTED SULEIMANKAKA AND CAREFULLY CARRIED HIM DOWN THE ROCKS...



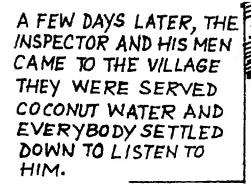
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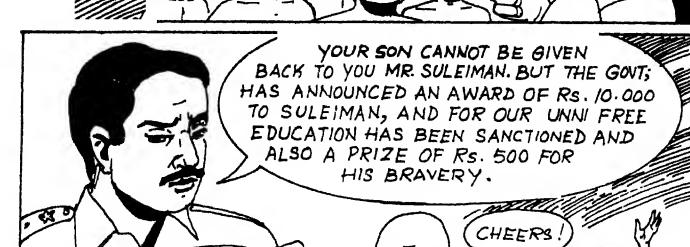








I'VE COME HERE TO THANK
SULFIMAN AND THE LITTLE
CHILD UNNI, FOR ASSISTING US
AND THE GOVT. THEY'VE HELPED
US TO CATCH THE CULPRITS.



IN THE MIDST OF THIS REJOICING, THE JEEP LEFT WITH THE POLICE OFFICERS, LEAVING BEHIND A GREAT NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHOSE LIVES HAD CHANGED WITH THIS GREAT EVENT.

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F

The Poisonous Gas

Story: Gyana Geetha (14)

T was on planet Orion that spacecraft Viber-II landed Or to put it more accurately crashlanded. After being abandoned by the pilot because of a major malfunctioning, it had continued to float in space, unguided and aimless, till it was attracted by Orion's gravitational force Made on planet Earth, it had travelled far to come to its journey's end on the Orion.

Viber-II was examined and explored by the intelligent natives of Orion It was finally placed in an open air museum for the Orionlings to see.

This was where a young

Orionling, Connie, saw
Viber-II for the first time
Being curious and bold and
also small, she managed
to get in through a small
opening into the craft
when no one was watching.

Conrue found herself in a compartment of the spacecraft which had not been examined because it had not been accessible to the big Orionlings Even little Connie found she could not move about in that small compartment. So, grabbing a big, shining, cylindrical object as a souvenir, she came out of the spacecraft.

She was examining her prize when suddenly, while tugging at a tube on the cylinder, she pulled it out.
A hole stood revealed.
Connie, undaunted by the damage, poked her nose into the opening "Aah!" she cried and fell unconscious

Upon examination, the doctor reassured Connie's parents saying that their child was now out of danger

"What made her unconscious, doctor?" asked Connie's father

"Looks like she inhaled a poisonous gas from the cylinder"

"What kind of gas is it?"

"A rare one," replied

the doctor. "It's called

Oxygen"

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Here they are' New books from CBT.

Geeta Dharmarajan's Papa Bear buys a new scooter — a special bear's scooter. Proud of his new

acquisition, he takes his family out for a ridebaby Boo in the front and Mama bear behind. Through the forest goes Papa bear's scooter Soon there are others clamouring for a ride-Chiti sparrow, three parrots, Maki deer and Stripes tiger. Can they all ride together on the scooter? Yes, with rather sad results Everything, however, ends happily when Papa bear's scooter is repaired and all the animals of the jungle buy scooters to suit their size

Deepak Harichandan's illustrations bring to life the scooter ride in the jungle

Do you ever spare a thought for the much-used roads that we walk upon, move upon, travel upon, apart from cursing its potholes, that is? Does it have life, does it sleep and wake up like the rest of the world? Yes, says Poile Sengupta—the road does sleep and wake up.

The Story of the Road tells you how the road

wakes up each morning, with the help of lively, colourful illustrations by Mickey Patel

The Story of the Road won a second prize in the Picture Book category of the Competition for Writers of Children's Books organised by Children's Book Trust

There is a purpose in the way each creature has been made; each has its place in Nature's scheme of things For some this knowledge has to come the hard way, as it does in the case of Tuffy.

Tuffy Turtle is unhappy with his shell. It does not allow him to jump or run or prance about like his other friends in the farmyard. He is unable to get rid of it, too. Unhappy, Tuffy learns the value of his shell when a fox attacks the animals in the farmyard. Hiding inside his shell, Tuffy is saved from the jaws of the fox. There is a lesson in this for all of us.

Where does the sun rise from and where does it

go after it sets? Lavlin
Thadani tells you what
she thinks in The Mystery
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bi-lingual (Hindi and English) activity book Each illustration, a face, has been divided into three parts with perforations. The user of the book has to tear along these perforations and can then mix and match the parts of different pages to have a wierd variety of faces. There is text to match the laces, in both

Hindi and English.

Every Indian is familiar with the name of Nelaii Subhas Chandra Bose, who played such a crucial. invaluable role in our struggle for independence, organising the Azad Hind Faul and setting up the Provisional Government of Azad Hind An exemplary patriot, much has been written on Netali Here is an account of his work, his life, by two persons, famous in their own right, who were closely associated with Netan in his effort to free India of her foleign rulers

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By Ivar Utial
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When you are bored restless, or just have a moment to spare, there is nothing like turning your mind to work out a brain teaser, fill up a crossword, answer a quiz, try to work your way through a maze, and the like *Puzzle Pack* 17 will come in handy at such times.

Bhayana Nair

To a dancer . . .

Being graceful
comes easily to you
Your body
seems to be one with the music
The sun
fil ers through the unidows
almost as brightly as your smile
Your skirt
makes a soft rustling sound
as you spin
like the wind

in the grass

on a summer's day
Your arms
are long and pale
like the dove
that soars in the sky above
You are like Mother Nature
striving for excellence
so you can be the best

Autumn Jennings
Canada
(Courtesy SICC)

PEN-FRIENDS CORNER

Those who wish to enrol 5652 themselves as members of " the Children's World Penfriends Club may do so by sending us the accompanying form. Cut out the form, fill up the details neatly, and mail it to us. As the form helps in indexing and preservation of records, its use is a MUST. All those who send in their particulars in the form will get priority in enrolment. Limit your hobbies and choice of countries to have pento TWO friends from Whenever members write to their pen-friends it will be advisable to mention their member-number

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India, US.A

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S o Capt. Rajendran
Camp Commandant
HQ IMTRAT

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C/o 99 APO Stamps, poetry writing Japan

5690

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5691

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Cabesa
Santa Cruz Goa 403005,
India
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Any country

5693
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PO Mulanthuruthy Via
Ernakulam Dist.
Kerala 682314
India
Travelling, meeting people
U.S.A., Canada

5694 Sunita Chaman (g. 15) House No 25, Guru Nanak Lajpat Nagar IV New Delhi 110024, India Photography, movies Japan, Russian Federa ion

5695
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South Arcot Dist,
Chidambaram
Tamil Nadu, India
Stamps
Mexico, Ziinbabwe

5696
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Cochin 622021
Kerala India
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USA, India

5697
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C'/o Mr P Rajkumar
Rajkumar's Den
Eraa Goan P O Nakachari
Jorhat 785635
Assam, India
Games, friendship
U S A Germany

5698
Bina Paul (g, 14)
Sarkari Bagan, Halflong
N.C. Hill's, Assam, India
Pen-friends, music
U.S.A., Hongkong

5699
Ajay Kumar (b 15)
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P O Rajapara, Assan
Boxing, wrestling
India

5700
Aarushi Sethi (g, 9)
61 Yati Nagar
Hansi 125033, Dist Hissar
Haryana, India
Painting reading
Germany, Bhutan

5701
Ashek Fernandez (b, 16)
P-230 Pandav Nagar
New Delhi 110018, India
Pen-friends, Caroni
Any country

5602
Divva G. (g. 13)
Ambuja Bh.van
Kadathy East, Marke: P.O.
Mivattupuzha 686673
Kerala, India
Music, reading
Any country

5703
Vishal Singal (b. 10)
C/o Dr Vijay Singal
Pooja Nursing Home
Raman 151301, Bathinda
Punjab, India
Reading pen-friends
Conada, India

5704
Deepthi Sudhakaran (g, 13)
Mayookha XIII/674
Thoppil, BMC 1081, Cochin
Kerala 682021, India
Reading, Badminton
India, Japan

5705 Mehdash R. (b. 14) Ashoka Juniors Roll No. 2801, Samik School Kazhakootam,
Thiruvananthapuram 695585
Kerala, India
Pen-friends
Any country

5706

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7. Parle Nav Chetan
Malviya Road, Vile Parle (E)
Bombay 400057. India
Pen-friends, stamps
U.S.A., Germany

5707
Ravi Ranjan (b. 16)
Room No. 123, Vikas Hostel
SDM School, Sonepat
Harvana 131001, India
Badminton, sketching
Any country

5708
Ratika Guglani (g. 11)
43 Club Road, Civil Lines
Ludhiana, Funjab India
Painting, movies
Any country

5709
Avinash Antony Thomas
(b, 10)
278, 16 h Main, 4th T-Plock
Jayanagar, Bangalore
Karnataka, India
Stamps and drawing
Any country

5710 Natasha Kochar (e, 10) 35-17 Eist Patel Nagar New Delhi 110008, India Music, Dance Singapore, Australia 5711
Chetan G. Kumtakar (b, 15)
Siddeshwar Nagar
Unkal Cross, Hubli 580031
Karnakata, India
Stamps, coins
Japan, Kuwait

5712
Abha Malik (g, 14)
18/8 Old Rajender Nagar
New Dellii 110060, India
Reading, swimming
U.K. USA

5713
S Ferozdeen (b, 15)
No 9 Anna Avenue
Bakethavatchalam Nagar
Adyar, Madras 600020
Tamil Nadu India
Music, Badminton
India, Australia

5714
Renu Verma (g. 15)
Mandakmi-19
Anushakti Nagar,
Bombay 400094
Maharashtra, India
Skating, eveling
Any country

5715
Rahul Radhakrishnan
(b, 11)
"Varsha"
Near Dhinesh Bhavan
Churrakal, Kannur
Kerala 670011, India
Stamps, reading
Japan

5716 Chandrika Chauhan (g. 14)

H. No. 8, Opp. Dhaka Bus Stop
Main Road Post Office
Kingsway Camp
Delhi 110009, India
Travelling, reading
India, U.S.A.

5717
V Kamalakannan (b, 13)
24/7. Vasanthappa Block
4th Main, 5th Cross
Gangenahalli, Bangalore
Karnataka, India
Stamps, reading
Any country

5718
Komal (g. 11)
2093. Type IV Flats
(Delhi Administration)
Gulabi Bagh
Delhi 110007, India
Stamps, music
Japan, Russian Federation

5719
Rajesh Kumar (b, 16)
Vikas Hostel
Room No 125, SDM School
Sonepat 131001
Haryana, India
Photography, stamps
Any country

5720
Shruthi Aishwarya (g, 8)
C/o Mr V.B. Menon
C-26 Indraprastha Aptmis
18-A Kalakshetra Road
Thiruvanmiyur
Madras 600041
Music, dance
U.K., U.S A.



Children get involved in the Post Office replica at the Eureka! museum. (Photograph Courtesy: BIS)

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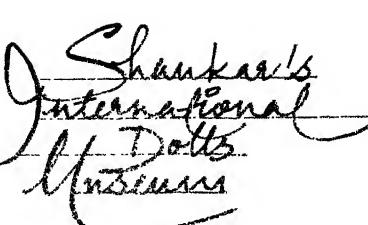
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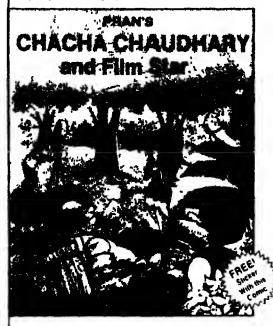
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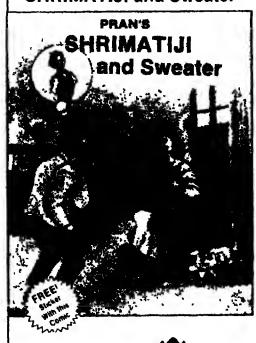
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CHILDRENS Word of North Mary New County Child Technology Child Technology Childrens (Child Technology Childrens Childrens thy Foton Caraphres

Dear Editor...

Hope and An Appeal

The profile on Santokba in your July issue shows that there is still hope for talented, aged people who are sadly not taken seriously. A little encouragement brought a total change in Santokba's life. It is the duty of the younger generation to encourage such skilful

From name-calling to absolute adoration, the love-hate relationship with teachers carried on through school and college.
'Golgappa' was a fat maths 'Sir', 'TDH' was the 'tall, dark and hansome' English professor with a deep, rich voice that made Yeats sound divine 'Ambreeo' (embryo) was the Bio teacher with the mostest motherliness

Strange, but when one recalls one's student days one remembers one's eternal haste to "get out of school", to "finish college and studies" so that teachers would belong in the past and be, at best, faded memories

And yet, not a day passes at the Children's World desk when the memory of a loved teacher, a lesson taught well, does not flash by The infinite patience of one's own teachers, the painstaking explaining—all aid one

people, so that they shine, bringing glory to our motherland India. The young people have been going crazy about Western culture. It's time, they look back and revive the former glory of Indian art and culture. Once Orissa had been known for the 'Pata-paintings' which had been a major folk school of art in the region. But now these art-pieces

now, as one wades through heaps and heaps of articles written by children and adults alike—all striving to say something to fellow readers

Lessons, one realises, are not learnt through text-books alone. The best ones are learnt through human interaction and no salutations suffice to hail the teacher who cared to write, "Your hold over language is beautiful and masterful but without substance it is like a beautiful flower without fragrance," when one had turned in an assignment in class, one had not been prepared for

It is such a long time since that happened—that particular teacher became a life-long friend and is now the Principal of a well-known college But those well-chosen words, fresh in memory like Krishna's

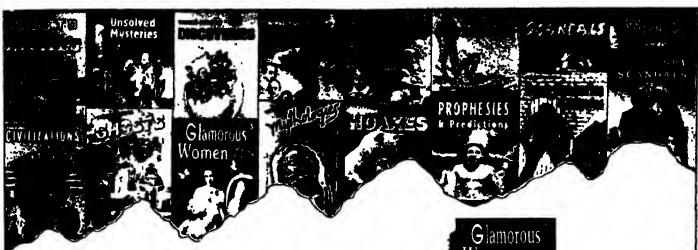
are made only by a few craftsmen in Sundarnagar(Orissa). If we had encouraged these people, then they would have been famous even outside India. So if we don't pay attention and unveil hidden talents we, after years will see Indian culture, art and tradition only as a shadow of its glorious past.

Mohor Ray (11), Delhi

..Dear Reader

never-fading varjayanti garland have proved to be the cornerstone of everything in life—preparedness to the best of one's ability

It is only in a country like ours, where the guru is parmodeva, that a great philosopher, thinker, teacher and President has dedicated his own birthday to teachers. It is with pride one remembers the late Dr Sarvapallı Radhakrıshnan whose birthday on September 5 is celebrated as Teacher's Day More so, because it gives us all a chance to gratefully acknowledge the Miss Castons of our lives, and say not just Thank you, Miss Caston but be thankful that each one of us has had the benefit of one such—and earnestly hope that till humanity cares, their tribe shall ever be on the increase.



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HOAXES

Narratives of wits of clever & terrorising deeds of insane would give readers several moments of laughter.

THANK YOU MISS CASTON

Story: M.S. Mahadevan

Illustrations: Deepak Harichandan

O you remember," said the young man. "The first time you came to Kausani..."

It was early spring. The snow had melted and the earth, rich brown and moist, sent forth new shoots. Ten-year-old Vishnu sat in his usual place by the window. overlooking the apple orchard. Someone was climbing up the twisting path that ran between trees. A short, stout lady dressed in coat and trousers, with a head scarf. Reaching the rickety gate, she paused for breath, her scarf slipped off and Vishnu had a proper look at her face scarred with age-lines, and the short grey hair. She walked up to the front door and knocked firmly.

His mother answered. Ija sounded flustered. "... From Lucknow... yes, Gopal wrote me a letter... expecting you by the later bus... Your room is ready... This way..."

Their vent to the



cowshed adjoining the house. It had a large room on top, used till lately to store apples. Last week, the room had been whitewashed and cleaned. It had four big windows that let in plenty of light and air and opened out to a superb view of the Himalayan peaks.

In a few minutes Ija was back; she placed a kettle of water on the chulha and took a shining brass tumbler out of the cupboard.

"The teacher from Lucknow has arrived," said Ija glancing at him.

"But, I suppose you know that... You must have seen her... You never miss a thing," she smiled. "You could have warned me... I was hoeing the vegetable patch... I must look a sight... What will she think of me?"

He could have replied that his Ija would never look a sight, not even if she slipped into a coal mine... she was the prettiest mother in the world, despite the worry lines on her face, despite the fact that she was always tired and rarely smiled like she used to in those days before his baujyu (father) died, three years ago. Now, it was

Ija who managed their small farm alone, ran the house, took care of him... Whenever he thought like this, about Ija and himself, he felt all choked up. The bus accident that had killed his baujyu had crippled him. Now all he did was sit by the window, alone with his thoughts.

"There are only rusks in the house," said Ija. "Do you think she might like some with her tea?"

His long, lonely silences disturbed his mother, but she tried not to show it. She arranged the rusks on a platter, and took it with the tea to the newcomer. If the lady stayed on as arranged, it meant a little money for them.

Gopal mama had said,
"Her name is Lucy Caston. She is the oldest teacher in the school, and now she is about to retire. She wants to go away to some quiet, peaceful place in the hills, and I suggested Kausani. Plenty of peace here... about the only thing there is," he added with a laugh. "These city people are different..."

But, it was Gopal mama who was different, thought Vishnu. He had changed ever since he got this job as a peon in

Lucknow. He was slick and smart now, with tight new trousers and shiny black shoes. You could see that he was uncomfortable in those shoes, but he insisted on wearing them... He talked more, laughed louder, but something was gone. A certain innocence, as if his dreams were no longer the same as theirs.

Ija had made an effort to welcome the lady from Lucknow. There was curried potato for lunch, sweet pumpkin and kheer. He heard her apologising for the simple meal and it made him very angry.

Ija saw his black scowl and said, "It's only for a "few days, till her luggage arrives... Besides, I don't mind. She is a mem and must be used to better things, but she has no airs... Now, eat your kheer."

But, he sulked all day, refused to touch the sweet, even though it was a favourite and his mouth watered at the sight of it, so fragrant and creamy.

It was a week later. Ija had gone to Almora that day, to buy a new plough. He was alone and Miss Caston walked in. Just like that.

AND THE PERSON AND

CHILDREN'S WORLD SEPTEMBER 1993

"You must be Vishnu," she said with a friendly smile. "I have seen you many times." She did not add that she had often waved but he never returned her greeting.

"What a lovely view, you have from here," she said sitting beside him, without waiting for an invitation.

He ignored her and stared out of the window towards the peaks.

"I love the mountains," she said enthusiastically. "When I was a little girl, I saw a picture of a mountain in a book. A towering, overpowering mountain and I knew that this must be the pillar that

holds the sky up, and keeps it from falling on our heads... Sounds silly, doesn't it... but, I didn't know better."

Vishnu looked towards the west, in the direction of the four peaks. She followed his gaze and chuckled. "Well I wasn't wrong... was I?" she said. "Somebody even named those peaks Chaukhamba. The Four Pillars."

The next time she came, she had a present for him wrapped in a brown paper. After she had gone, he picked it up and examined it. There was a drawing book and a set of colour pencils... He

ran his hand over the smooth white paper, touched the colour pencils one by one... Then he tried them out. A short while later, when Ija looked in she found him bending over the book, pencil in hand... In a week the first book was over and she had to go to the market to buy another.

For Vishnu, a new world had suddenly opened out. He was still very quiet, but his silence was not an unhappy one. When he was drawing Ija could see that he was positively happy. He had often been troubled by nightmares in



the past. They left him sobbing and moody, the next day... Slowly they faded away.

One morning he was the little black bird that came to his windowsill in search of grains. It was the one, called Kaafal Pako because it heralded the ripening of the purple wild berry—the kaafal. So busy was he that he did not notice Miss Caston walk in and stand beside him. The bird flew away and he sighed.

"Don't worry... it will come again," she said picking up the sketch book and leafing through it, casually at first, then, with concentration. At last she put it down and said, "Now, you must try using paints... I'll show you how."

She went to Almora on the early bus, the next day and returned with a box of paints, brushes and paper. When IJa tried to thank her, Miss Caston brushed it aside.

"I was a teacher before I came here," she said to Ija. "I taught Art to school children, I am just a competent artist myself. There are thousands of people who are like me... good but not gifted... It is still too early to say anything, but

Vishnu may be different .. Given a chance, he may become really good... He shows promise."

Ija seemed a bit dazed. "I cannot afford Art lessons for him," she murmured.

"I'd like to teach him," said Miss Caston, quietly. "I don't want a fee."

As a teacher Miss Caston was strict, as well as patient. She insisted that Vishnu came to her class every morning just like an ordinary pupil. In the beginning, he did not like the idea of leaving his window seat, but Ija helped him across the room above the cowshed. Miss Caston had converted part of it into a studio and he had his own place by the window. The lessons turned out to be so interesting that soon he used to look forward to the next one... Sometimes, she would take out a book from her collection and tell him about world famous artists. He was surprised to hear that many of them had been so poor that they could not afford to buy even the art materials, but their will to go on painting was so strong that they often starved, rather than give up. She showed him some of the pictures, of

the paintings in the Ajanta caves, done a thousand years ago, but still as vivid; of the ceiling of the Sistine chapel in Italy that had been painted by Michelangelo, of paintings that adorned art galleries all over the world.

When he listened to these stories, Vishnu drew courage from them. Everything was possible if you had the will and the discipline to enforce it. "Self discipline is very necessary." Miss Caston, told him. "In Art and in life as well..."

It was not always smooth sailing. Sometimes, he felt that it was all no good A scene that looked so alive and colourful became dead the minute he tried to paint; the shades were so hard to get, the contours all wrong. In frustration, he'd crumple the sheet and fling it aside, eyes blurred with tears... But, the next morning he'd be back again.

She taught him for two years and the day came when she had to admit that she could teach him no more. She wrote to a friend of hers, a famous artist, who lived in Delhi.

His name was Ajay



Singh and he was most unlike an artist, thought Vishnu. Tall, hefty, bearded, he looked more like a giant, a friendly giant with a hearty appetite. Ija invited him to lunch on the day he arrived at Kausani in response to Miss Caston's letter. Vishnu watched in fascinated silence while Mr. Ajay Singh ate his way through a pile of rotis and topped it up with four bowls of kheer. He kept the bowl down at last, and gave a sigh of absolute contentment. then looked at Vishnu and smiled. Vishnu decided that he liked this man very much.

Ajay Singh went back to Delhi, but a month later there was a letter from him. It had some interesting news. "...There is a newly set up foundation," he wrote, "created by a rich philanthropist to promote and encourage gifted children in our country... I have recommended Vishnu's name and their response is encouraging. They will take care of the expenses that a specialised training might require but he has to move to Delhi..."

"Well?" said Miss



Caston putting the letter down. "Of course, he must go," cried Ija. "It is an opportunity beyond my wildest dreams..."

The day before his departure Vishnu seemed almost depressed. "Why?" asked Miss Caston. "Are you scared... because it will be a different place? New faces?"

When he did not reply she said, "Don't be... You will be among friends; people who want to help you... You will miss your home in the beginning, but remember it will always be there, waiting for you..."

"And you?" asked Vishnu. "Don't you think that I will miss you as well... Why can't we carry on as before? There is so much that you can teach me still. I don't want to go."

"Now you are being silly," she chided. "It is like saying that you want to stay in kindergarten for the rest of your life simply because you like your class teacher. We all have to move on..."

He could not hold back his anguish any more and buried his face in his arms. Looking at his bowed head. Miss. Caston said, "A teacher and a pupil are companions on a journey. In the beginning the teacher shows the way, but after a while it is the pupil who must move ahead ... onto new frontiers."

"Do you remember?" said the young man.
"That first time you came to Kausani?"

Ten years had slipped by. In those years a great deal had happened to Vishnu. His first exhibition had been a success, and all those years of hard work and effort had begun to pay dividends.

In the meanwhile Miss

Caston had grown very old and a few days ago had a stroke that had paralysed her completely. The doctors were not very optimistic. He had rushed as soon as the news reached him.

"See... I have a pair of legs now," he said, talking to her even though the doctor had said that she would not understand or reply. "I can walk and run on these legs. But, it was you who taught me to stand long before. Thank you."

She was drifting away now, losing her hold on the slender skein that bound her to life. He held her weak, wrinkled hand in his big, strong one,

"Thank you," he whispered, and it seemed to him that she heard, for there was the faintest of flutters in his palm a slight pressure that was to him, a reply.



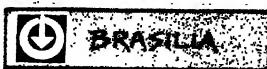


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MAIN CITIES . RELIGION . LITERACY RATE . MOUNTAINS





AND THE WAR TO AND THE MENT OF THE PARTY OF

Text: O.P. Bhagat Illustrations: Subir Roy

This is not an European tale — of the people who settled in that part of South America which is called Brazil.

It goes back to the days when Indians — original inhabitants of the continent — had their own civilisation there.

Many Indians are still there. So are their tales. They can be read in books of myths and legends. For the children many of the stories have been retold in a simple way.

NE day a deer was roaming along a river bank. It was green with grass, bushes and trees. He liked it very much.

He thought that he should build a house there. It would be so nice to rest or sleep there when he was tired. In fact, he should have done it long back.

The deer looked around for a site for his house. Soon he came to a spot which, though grown over

A Brazilian tale



with bushes, suited him He decided to start work from the next day

It so happened that just then, some distance away, a jaguar also thought of building a house. He needed it for rest or sleeping after going about all day long.

And he set out in search of a site. He wandered along the same river bank. He came to the spot which the deer had chosen. He liked it so much that he decided to start work there from the next day.

As planned, the deer went back to that place. He cleared away all the bushes. The job exhausted him. But he was happy with the level ground he had created. That was enough for the day

After the deer had gone, came the jaguar. He was surprised to see the site cleared of bushes. Perhaps Tupan was helping him in housebuilding. And he looked at the sky to thank the god who lived up there.

Then he started to lay the floor. By the time he had finished work, it was night. He went away satisfied.

The next morning the deer came there. When he saw the floor, he too thought that Tupan had

made his task easier. He thanked the god and raised walls for the house.

Soon after his going away returned the jaguar. Happy in the belief that Tupan had built the walls for him, he began to work on the roof. And he finished it at a stretch.

The next day came the deer. He built two rooms, one for himself and the other for the helpful god Tupan. Tired as he was, he went into his room and lay down to sleep.

At night the jaguar came there. He saw the two rooms, one of which was occupied. Thinking that it was Tupan who was in, he went into the other and slept there.

In the morning the two got up at the same time. The jaguar was surprised when he saw the deer standing before him.

"Is it you who helped me build the house?" he asked. "Is it you who helped me build the house?" was the deer's answer.

Since they had built the house together, the two decided to share it like friends.

"I am going out hunting," said the jaguar.
"Before I come back, keep everything ready for cooking — pots, water, firewood."

"Everything will be ready," replied the deer.

It was a deer which the jaguar killed and brought home. The deer was not happy at this. He did not eat the meat which the jaguar cooked. But the jaguar ate his fill.

The next day the deer went out in search of food. The jaguar stayed back to keep everything ready for cooking.

In the forest the deer spotted another jaguar. The sharp-clawed animal was further sharpening his claws on the bark of a tree. The deer slunk away from there.

He came upon an anteater. "That jaguar over there," said the deer, "has been saying nasty things about you."

"How dare he?" said the ant-eater in anger.

He went towards the jaguar and killed him from behind. The deer took the carcass home.

This time the jaguar was sad. And he did not eat the meat which the deer cooked.

They retired to their rooms. But neither slept. The jaguar lay awake, fearing that the deer would come there and kill him for his meat. The deer was troubled by the thought that the jaguar would come and prey upon him.

Hours passed. Sud-



denly the deer nodded. His antlers hit the wall that separated his room from the jaguar's. The sound was loud. The jaguar thought that the deer was coming for him. In fear he screamed. This in turn frightened the deer.

Both leapt to their feet and ran out of the house. One went this way, and the other that. They stopped only when they reached different parts of the forest.

Since then the deer and the jaguar have not lived together.



I'm not a tree but I have leaves. I might have tables but I'm not a restaurant. You can't eat me but you could digest me if you tried.
Who am I?

(A Book)

I wish I had enough money to buy an elephant. What on earth do yo

What on earth do you need an elephant for? I don't, I just need the money.

What clothing does a house wear?
Address

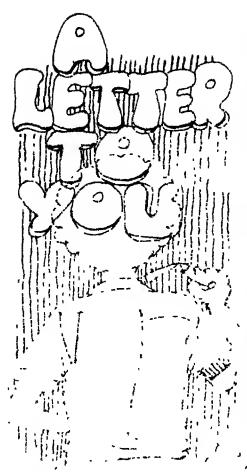
My mother does bird imitations.
How's that?
She watches me like a hawk.

Name a vegetable of which you throw away the outside, cook the inside, eat the outside, and throw away the Inside BHUTTA or corn-on-the cob.

Why is tennis such a noisy game?
Because the players raise a racket.

Why did the banana split? Because it saw the bread—box and the milk—shake

Boy snake to girl snake. "Give me a little hiss."



One of my theories about Raghu is that he is in any case disguised. I really don't think he belongs to the human species; he is probably about twenty steps down on the ladder of evolution. I mean, if evolution has nineteen steps and I was right on top, then Raghu would be...

Anyway as I was saying, it all started with one of Raghu's extra foolish schemes. Now I have nothing against schemes, probably nobody would have invented the wheel if somebody did not think of a scheme. But then the scheme has to be

thought by somebody like
me on the top of the
ladder of evolution not
twenty rungs below. Like
Raghu. Now Raghu...
Anyway, let me tell you
how it started. Finally.
Instead of just yapping.

Anyway, let me tell you how it started. Finally. Instead of just yapping. Well, there I was, sitting in my room, on my bed, practising mind control when my brother walked into the room. (When I say practising mind control. I mean I was trying not to think of the mango ice-cream in the fridge.) Anyway, there I was doing important work, when who should walk in but my brother, bold as the name plate on the door of the principal's office. And not only does he just walk in but he goes right upto my desk, opens the drawer of my desk while I am right there, four feet away.

Of course I shouted. I shouted, "Hey, what are you doing? That's **my** desk!"

But he just went on rummaging.

I screamed, "Hey you! Can't you hear me? Stop looking through my things!"

But he just went on rummaging. Finally, I jumped off my bed and went up and yanked his arm. I yanked it really hard.

Dear visible and invincible.

All good things have to happen some time and this time it has happened — Raghu is in disgrace, in total, utter disgrace. Finally! At last! At long last!

It started as usual with Raghu's cleverness; I mean his foolishness. Or rather his foolishness cleverly disguised as cleverness. Or rather, foolishly disguised as cleverness. Whatever it is, Raghu's brains ought to be preserved for humanity under the label 'Doubtful'.



"Hey you!" he shouted.
"What are you doing?
That's my arm!"

"Yes I know it is!" I shouted back.

"How do you know it is my arm?" he screamed.

"What do you mean, how do you know? I mean how do I know! What do you mean?" I screamed too.

"I'm supposed to be invincible," yelled my brother at the top of his voice. "I am invincible, you can't see me."

"I can!" I yelled at the top of my voice.

Then I remembered that I was also on the top rung of the ladder of evolution. So I brought my voice down a step or two. It would never do for highly evolved beings to shout. You haven't heard of Darwin shouting, have you? But then I wonder if Darwin ever had a younger brother.

Anyway, there I was looking at my younger brother whom I had caught rummaging among my things in the drawer and who was screaming at the top of his voice with his eyes shut, "I am invincible! I am invincible!" when my mother walked in.

"What Perky are you doing with your brother's



arm?" was the first thing she asked. "Are you going to murder him or are you merely butchering his arm?"

"I am invincible! I am invincible!" went on screaming my brother at the top of the ladder of... I mean at the top of his voice.

"He was snooping among my things," I told my mother in my low and evoluted voice.

"I am invincible! I am invincible!" screeched my brother. He sounded like a particularly irritating piece of chalk.

"I can't hear you Perky," said my mother. At least, I think that's what she said because I was lip reading. I couldn't hear a thing myself because of the chalk noises that my brother was making.

"But please stop acting stupid and let your brother live!" And to make it really quite clear, she unyanked my hand from my brother's arm.

That had the fantastic effect of stopping my brother's screeches.

"Now Perky," my mother continued, glaring at me. "What were you doing to your brother?"

I was saved from answering by my brother

who started off at the top of his voice, at top speed.

"I am invincible and he saw me. He can't see me. I am invincible, Raghu said. Raghu said some words and made me invincible."

"But I can see you too!" said my mother smiling.
Smiling!

"Oh," said my brother.
Then after a small moment, he brightened up.
"May be you can only see an outline," he suggested.
"Like a map. An outline map."

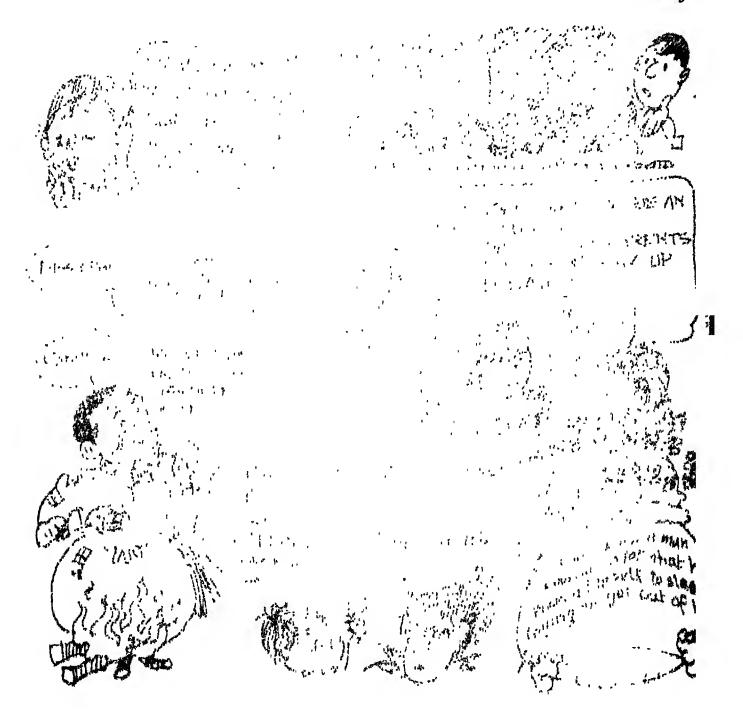
"I can see all of you,"
my mother said, still
smiling.

"You mean I'm not even

in dotted lines?" my brother asked. Smiling!

My mother shook her head. And my brother decided to go and ask Raghu for better words to make him better 'invincible' and I was scolded and made to... I better continue next time...

Yours never invincible Perky



The Ghazal Findustani Music Mazumdar Mustrations: Deepak Harichandan

Among the great ghazal singers was one Begum Akhtar. She came from Lucknow and along with the thumri she also sang the ghazal, so that she is known to us today as the Queen of Ghazal. What exactly is the ghazal that the Begum sang? The word actually means talking to a woman but it is more than just speaking. For an active life at court, it became common to learn certain manners and courtesies in behaviour. One of these was to talk gracefully specially when talking to ladies. When a man wanted to tell a lady that he loved her he was expected to say it in a fine style and the ghazal was written in this fine style of speaking. The ghazal also spoke of people whose love had been forgotten or 'spurned by the ladies and the singer and the poet sang and wrote about the

sorrow of the person who had been turned away. The ghazal was full of longing and sadness about unsuccessful matters of romance and the singer had to bring this out in her music. Begum Akhtar was a famed singer of the ghazal for she sang with deep feeling and pronounced each word so clearly that listeners could get to the meaning of her music without effort. Till today, the *ghazal* is a highly popular form of music and singers like Jagit Singh, Ghulam Ali, and so on are known all over the world for their ghazal numbers.

As the listening public began to increase there were demands for more new music. By the beginning of this century, people had begun to take a keen interest in going to the cinema and motion pictures began to be made for entertaining the

masses. The films had to be entertaining for all kinds of people and not just music lovers Music was the main source of entertainment. Hence, these early films were really musicals that had well known singers acting and singing out the roles. Some of the actors and actresses who were not good singers needed a playback singer to sing the numbers from behind. while the actor and actress just moved their lips on screen. K. L. Saigal was a famous actor and playback singer of the early days of Indian cinema and his songs are based on ragas and expressive ideas. Lata Mangeshkar is India's best known playback singer, who has sung for hundreds of films over many years.

The early film songs which are now called classic numbers were sung with a lot of instruments being played while the singer sang the song. This orchestra, as it is called, played every time the singer needed to have some rest in between the song and listeners could listen to some sweet music while the singer rested. There were mikes fitted near the instruments so that the sound of each of these instru-

ments was not covered over by that of a louder instrument. Orchestras became a very important part of the modern singers need and today, in the days of pop music, no singer can perform effectively without a nice sounding orchestra to help him liven his singing. Nowadays there are several pop. Jazz and rap singers who can sing any

number from a new composition to a favourite folk number with all the gusto and rhythm of modern day needs and thus Indian music has reached another age of listener appeal. While we cannot say how long this trend will last, we know for sure that there will be change for a still better form of music when the demand arises.





Story: Cheryl Rao Illustrations: Viky Arya

SYNOPSIS

Dull holidays with their grandparents in a rambling old house, become exciting for Naina and Rohan. They have their grandmother's locked rooms to explore. They recover a stolen idol from the jungle and with the arrival of their cousins Micky and Pradeep, even discover a secret room and a diary. Impatient Rohan and Micky are disappointed there is no treasure. So it is left to Naina and Pradeep to discover the gold coins.. Just a week left for their parents to return and they have so much to tell...

CHAPTER VI

HE next few days
were spent out
doors—the boys
playing football and Naina
playing with Rani. By the
time Shakuntala came to
pick up the children, they
were browner and healthier than she remembered.

"Look at you," she exclaimed. "This holiday seems to have agreed with both of you. You're the picture of health! What have you fed them, Mummy?" she asked Grandma as she hugged her children.

"Plain fare, clean air and lots of activity!" Grandpa intervened. "Have they told you what they've been doing in the past 39 days? Nabbing thieves, discovering secret passages, disappearing into the hills for hours at a stretch..."

"Grandpa!" shouted the children together, and the old man smiled.

"Okay, okay. So you were heroes of sorts! But don't let that go to your heads!"

Mummy was too confused to understand what

Now read on...

was happening and Grandma hastened to assure her that she'd tell her the whole story soon. They moved off talking softly together, and the children joined their cousins.

Suddenly, they heard Mummy's voice calling sharply, "Naina! Rohan!" and they looked at each other. What was it now? Were they to be upbraided instead of praised for their role in catching the statue; thief? Were they to get a dressing down for tramping around the bowels of

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the earth instead of helping Grandma and Grandpa?

They went in slowly, peering into the rooms as they passed, to see where their mother was. They found her in the playroom and Naina started. She'd wanted to show Mummy the room herself; she'd wanted to keep it closed so that she could dramatically throw open the door and present Mummy with the fruits of her labour. But she had forgotten and Mummy had caught sight of everything in passing. There she stood now, transfixed-her eyes glued to the screen.

"Do you like it, Mummy? Doesn't it look pretty after all the cleaning and waxing and polishing we did?" Naina asked tentatively.

"Pretty?" Ma turned on her, a strange look in her eyes. "Pretty?" she repeated. "Do you know what this screen is worth? My dear girl, this is worth a fortune! You've uncovered a gold mine here!"

Rohan couldn't believe his ears. Admittedly the screen looked a lot better than when they had started out with its cloth panels, but a fortune?

What was so grand about



"This is ivory, and this is mother-of-pearl," his mother said, touching the delicate inlays of the screen reverently. "In itself, they are valuable. On this antique screen they'd be worth lakhs of rupees!"

Naina gasped, but never for a moment doubted her mother's assessment. She'd always known that there were special things—valuable things—hidden among the old trunks and furniture!

"At least we can keep this treasure then, Ma," Rohan said. "We've had to give up the statue with no more than a "Thank You', and the coins are going too—but this screen...This can stay here, can't it? No one will come to claim it and say it belongs to them, will they?"

"Well, I hope not,"
Grandma said. "The
discovery is all yours—and
someday the screen will be
yours, too. I promise you
that." The children sighed
with relief.

"And to think we said that nothing ever happens here!" Rohan breathed. "We've never had adventures like these or made discoveries like this! When are we coming here again?" he asked, forgetting how reluctantly he had left the big city for this quiet hill town and the company of the old people.

"As soon as you and your grandparents can stand the strain of so much excitement in so short a time!" Ma laughed.

And putting her arms around her children she drew them back reluctantly to the every-dayness of daily life.

Concluded



CHILDREN'S WORLD SEPTEME

ANAGRAMS

CROSS WORD

All the answers are anagrams of the clues. Can you work them out?

1	2	3	4		5	6	7
							•
8		9				10	
11			12				
13	14			15	16		17
			18				
19		20			21	22	
23		24				25	
26					27		

CLUES

	ACROSS		DOWN					
1. Sonar	4. Nearest	8. Rat	1. Recasts	2. Parts	3. Tertian			
9. Stile	10. Opt	11. Taxer	4. Elance	5. Steer	6. Citren			
12. Terrace	13. Chaste		7. Drate	14. Trounce				
15. Scrape	19. Restful		16. Parents	17. Retinal				
21. Nails 25. Ape	23. Tan 26. Shorten	24. Cruel 27. Tonne	18. Occurs 20. Tonal	19. Fates 22. Panes				

Benefactor of Humanity

Alexander Graham Bell



"Mr. Bell you have made an invention that will change the way people live all over the world," said the Emperor Don Pedro of Brazil prophetically a century ago when the famous Scot-Canadian inventor, Alexander Graham Bell (1847-1922) perfected the first successful telephone in 1876.

On March 10, 1876, Bell made the first telephone call to his assistant in another room. He said, "Mr. Watson, come here: I want you." On October 6, Bell spoke to Watson, over a line joining Boston and Cambridge Massachusetts, demonstrating conclusively that his telephone was able to operate over long distances.

Bell's interest in the subject came from his work as a teacher of deafmutes. He made a deep study of the human ear and understood how sound travelled through the air in the form of wayes. Bell tried to devise

an instrument which would translate these vibrations of the air into something that his pupils could see and understand. He had in mind something of the nature of a pointer which would vibrate in harmony with the sound waves in the air.

The more he thought about the problem the more his interest grew in the subject of transmitting sound from one place to another. He built an apparatus of playing

musical instruments at a distance; the strings of a piano were operated by electromagnets which were activated by electric currents passed along wires.

For three years he worked on his musical telegraph helped by his assistant, Thomas Watson. One day Watson was adjusting a faulty contact in the transmitter and Bell heard the twang of a steelspring coming from the receiver. He realised that a spring of this kind could be made to vibrate in sympathy with the sound waves created by human speech and the vibration pattern could be impressed on the flow of current through a wire.

He began to experiment and within a year he had built a workable telephone—a device which was able to reproduce the complex vibration of human speech. Further improvements in Bell's instruments were carried out by Edison and Prof. D.E. Huges. But it was Bell who cornered glory by patenting the first telephone capable of reproducing speech.

Oddly enough the telephone was received with the same icy indifference that marked the discovery of the telegraph. Bell was not discouraged. He believed, "It's dogged." In 1878 he made a trip to his native Scotland. He travelled to London, and presented Queen Victoria with a pair of ivory telephones. This gift did lots to stimulate interest in the telephone in Britain and in 1879 the first of London's telephone exchanges was opened.

Once the telephone demonstrated how useful it could be, the demand for instruments grew by leaps and bounds and the more telephones there were, the more useful the system became.

Today we make hundreds of millions of calls a day through the world's network of telephone systems. There are over 360 million phones for a population of some 4,000 million.

Bell ranks with the benefactors of humanity. For as H.W. Beecher puts it: "He that invents a machine augments the power of a man and the well-being of mankind."

Apart from his invention of the telephone, Bell, an indefatigable experimentor, made a number of other inventions like the photophone (apparatus in which

sounds are transmitted by light), audio-meter (instrument for testing hearing power). But it is his epoch-making telephone that has made him an immortal of science. As he himself puts it, "The singing of the telephone wires never stop; for its singing is the story of life and life never stops."

His great achievement sprang from persistency and audacity of creative imagination. Shortly before his death on August 2, 1922, Bell gave an inspiring message to an audience of young students:

"Don't keep for ever on the public road, going only where others have gone. Leave the beaten path occasionally and drive into the woods. You will be certain to find something you have never seen before. It will be a little thing but do not ignore it. Follow it up, explore around it, one discovery will lead to another and before you know it, you will have something really worth thinking about."

"Go as far as you can see. When you get there you'll see further." That was the secret of Bell's magnificent achievement.



HE train drew into the sleepy station of Tiruvalla at the crack of dawn. Three glum looking children got off, rubbing the sleep out of their eyes, carrying a suitcase between them. They were the only ones to get off and as the train left the station they looked around to see whether anybody had come to receive them.

The eldest of the trio, who was 12 years old, peered into the gloom.

"Can you see anybody, Raghu?" asked the girl who was two years younger. She held the youngest child by the hand.

"No, I hope Mummy's letter reached Amooma (grandmother) and she knows that we are coming," replied Raghu, continuing to scan the platform.

"Oh, I am so sleepy," said the younger boy, letting out a huge yawn.

"Don't fall asleep again now, Gopu," said the girl. "Wait till we get home or we will have to leave you here."

"How mean of you to say that, Sheila," said Gopu. "I am going to tell Mummy when we get back."

"Tale-tatler," muttered Sheila.

Before Gopu could reply to this insult a soft voice at his elbow asked, "Are you the children from Delhi who have come to visit the Big House?"

"Yes, has Amooma sent you to pick <u>us</u> up?" asked Raghu turning to the old man who had asked the question.

He nodded and picking up the suitcase signalled the children to follow him. They walked behind the old man to an old battered car which seemed quite incapable of carrying them very far. The children got in and with many coughs and sputters

the car set off.

Amooma's house was some distance from the town centre and faced a huge temple. A huge grey dilapidated gate led to the pillared portico where stood Amooma, an anxious expression on her lined but still beautiful face. It broke into a smile as she saw the three children wearily alight from the car.

"Welcome, my dears," she said, hugging them in turn. "I am so sorry to hear about your father. But doesn't matter, he will soon get better and then everything will be all right."

"But I wish Daddy had not fallen ill," said Gopu, his lower lip quivering.

"I know, my dear," said Amooma, kissing him.
"But now that his fever is down and he has started eating, in no time at all he will be walking about."

"But till he has the operation he cannot be

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completely okay. And we don't have the money for the operation," said Sheila.

"Somehow we will find the money," *Amooma* reassured them.

"If only we could find the old painting of the dancing girl that Mummy told us about, we could sell it and use the money for Daddy's operation," said Sheila

"Yes, my dears, but we don't even know where it was lost," said Amooma. "All that I know is, that before your great-grandfather died he told me that if I found the painting I would be able to live well for the rest of my life. Just then my stepbrother, your Great-uncle Krish, walked into the room and my father stopped talking. He did not like my step-brother, vou see. A few minutes later he mumbled that I should take care to keep the lamps clean and then slipped into a coma from which he never recovered. I think he should have known that I would always keep the lamps clean for we did not have electricity then." Amooma sounded most indignant. Knowing Amooma's fetish for cleanliness the children forgot their sorrow

at their father's illness and smiled.

The next few days dragged as the children tried to get used to living without their parents. They missed their mother and they worried about their father. Gopu cried himself to sleep every night and Amooma began to get worried about him. One day Sheila and Raghu were sitting under the palm tree playing with a newborn calf

"Sheila, we should do something to distract Gopu," said Raghu.

"Yes, Amooma is getting worried and she too will fall ill if she continues to do so," said Sheila.
"But what can we do? He misses Mummy so much. After all, he is only six."

"I know what we can do. We will pretend to hunt for the missing painting You know how Gopu loves to solve mysteries and this is sure to distract him," said Raghu.

They went to find Gopu, who was watching the pigs being fed, and told him about the search for the painting. Gopu was most excited.

"When can we start hunting for it?" he asked.

"Well, no time like the present," replied Raghu, giving Sheila a secret smile at the success of their plan.

Just then they heard a voice behind them ask, "What are you children going to search for? Can I help you?" It was Greatuncle Krish.

Raghu remembered what Amooma had said about great-grandfather not speaking about the painting before Greatuncle Krish. So he kept quiet. But Gopu immediately piped up about the painting and how they were going to search for it. Great-uncle Krish laughed and wished the children good luck.

The children decided to begin their search in the library where there were old books, diaries and papers. The room had not been opened for years and there was a thick coating of dust on everything. They had to walk gingerly so as not to raise too much dust which made

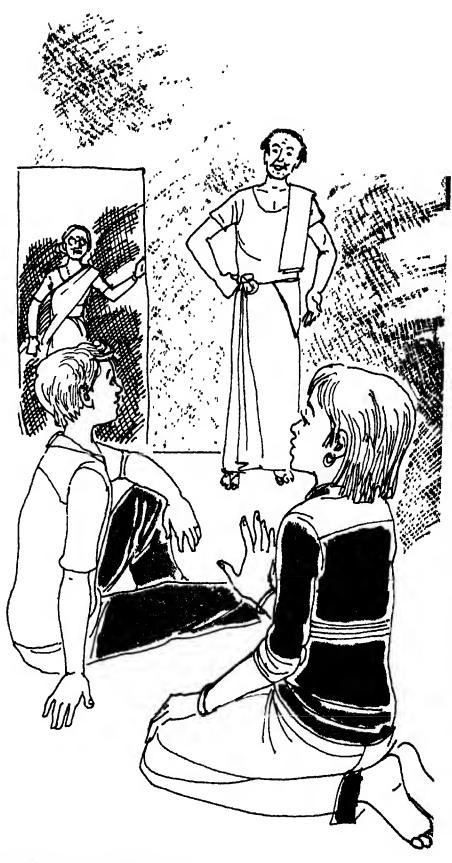


them sneeze.

They spent the whole morning in the library but found nothing. When Amooma called them for lunch she was surprised to see three dusty ragamuffins emerge from the library. However, she understood when they explained that they were searching for the missing painting.

"Well, go and wash and then come for lunch. I have made fish curry and rice and there is hot payasam for desert," she said bustling away to the dining hall. The children stayed not on the order of their going. Fish curry and rice was a favourite with all of them.

Amooma was thrilled to see that even Gopu seemed to have got back his appetite as he asked for a second helping. Raghu and Sheila smiled at each other. Their plan was working marvellously. After lunch the three children sat down on the cool cement floor of the portico and talked about the missing painting. Soon Greatuncle Krish joined them. Raghu and Sheila fell silent but Gopu was so full of the missing painting that he could not talk of anything else. Raghu



tried to signal him to keep quiet but did not succeed. Sheila looked at Greatuncle Krish. She could not understand how greatgrandfather could have disliked Great-uncle Krish. She loved him. He was so full of fun and ever ready to play with them. As she heard Gopu tell Great-uncle Krish about the mystery, she remembered what Amooma had said about great-grandfather telling her to be sure to keep the lamps clean.

"Hey, I know, maybe we should examine all the lamps. Remember what *Amooma* told us?" she said.

Great-uncle Krish looked most puzzled.

Sheila and Gopu hastened to tell him about great-grandfather's remarks about keeping the lamps clean.

Raghu looked more and more disapproving. Why were both Sheila and Gopu letting out all their secrets? Anyway, it did not really matter for they had no real hope of finding the painting, he consoled himself.

Great-uncle Krish got up and went off to the fields. Gopu went off with him. As soon as they had gone Raghu took Sheila to task for telling Greatuncle Krish everything.

"I am sure that greatgrandfather was mistaken. I love uncle Krish and can't think of any reason why anybody should dislike him," Sheila replied.

The rest of the day the children spent examining all the lamps they could lay their hands on. But to no avail. That evening when they were at prayers Sheila's eyes fell on the huge lamp which stood before the deity of Vishnu. They had not examined that lamp. But how could they? Amooma would not be very happy if they played around with her puja materials though she did not mind them fiddling with the other lamps in the house. The best time would be mid-morning when the morning puja would have been over and preparations for the evening puja still safely far away.

The next morning the three children gathered in the puja room, excitement writ large on their faces. Gopu was so excited that he could hardly stand still. Raghu carefully took the lamp off its stand and the three of them started a systematic search. It seemed to be like any other ordinary lamp.

Gopu soon lost interest and sat down in a corner trying to figure out where the painting could be hidden. Unconsciously Gopu fiddled with a huge peacock shaped lamp in the corner. It had not been used for years. In the olden days when the annual temple festival was on and the house used to be full of guests, the lamp used to be lit and kept in the middle of the inner garden to illuminate the verandah which ran alongside. When lit, the lamp was supposed to have about fifty wicks and used up three litres of oil in an hour.

Suddenly a part of the peacock's neck came off in Gopu's hand. Hearing his exclamation Raghu and Sheila turned.

"Oh, what have you done, Gopu?" exclaimed Sheila. "You have broken the peacock."

"Doesn't matter," said Raghu, seeing Gopu's frightened expression. "I am sure I can fix it back. It seems to have just come unscrewed." He tried to put the piece back. Suddenly he stopped and looked into the hole in the peacock's neck.

"Hey, there seems to be

something stuffed inside," he said. He put in his hand but could only just touch something stiff. "Gopu, you put in your hand as it is smaller." Gopu obliged and withdrew his hand gingerly holding on to a roll of paper. Raghu took it from him and opened it. As it was unrolled the children's eyes widened, for, on parchment had been painted a dancing girl, her anklets, bangles and necklaces gleaming in the dim light of the room.

"We have found the painting," shouted Raghu.

Sheila and Gopu could only nod their heads excitedly.

Gopu again put his hand into the hole. "I can

feel something else," he said. Slowly he took out what looked like a piece of paper. The children opened it. It looked like a letter but it was written in Malayalam. They ran to show the beautiful painting and the letter to Amooma.

Amooma was as thrilled as the children.

"Well, now we can sell this painting and use the money to pay for Daddy's operation," said Sheila.

"There will be no need for that," said Great-uncle Krish from the doorway. They all turned in surprise. Seeing their questioning looks, he laughed and said, "I have not been idle all this time, you know. We are going to sell this house and Amooma and I will shift

into a flat in the city. We will get enough money for the operation and some left for us to live on." The children were silent. They knew how much Amooma loved the house which had been in her family for over 300 years.

"But there is no need to either sell the house or the painting," said Amooma who had been reading the old letter. "In this letter, which was written by my father, he says that he has left a huge collection of old coins and jewellery in the panel behind the kitchen stove." The children and Greatuncle Krish ran to the panel. After much pushing and pulling Greatuncle Krish and Raghu managed to get it open. There, before their eyes was a large bag. Uncle Krish picked it up and gave it to Amooma who opened it with trembling fingers. Inside were all that great-grandfather had said as well as some wads of 100-rupee notes. The five of them looked at each other in joy.

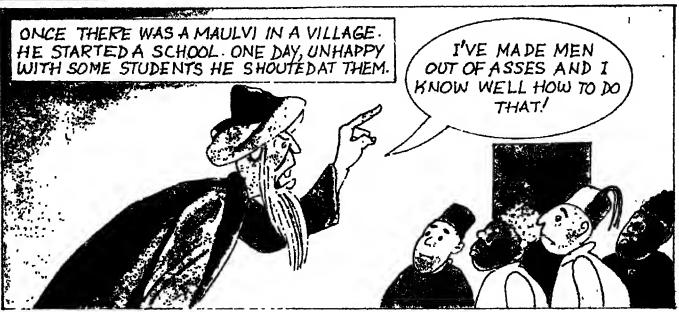
"Maybe you should have cleaned the lamps more thoroughly Amooma, as great-grandfather told you to," said Sheila.

All of them laughed while Amooma blushed.



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A WASHERMAN, PASSING BY THE SCHOOL, OVERHEARD THE MAULU'S BOAST. HE HAD NO CHILDREN BUT MANY ASSES



HE RAN HOME AND TOLD HIS WIFE







W. J. W. .





AFTER THE WASHERMAN LEFT, THE MAULVI SAID TO A STUDENT



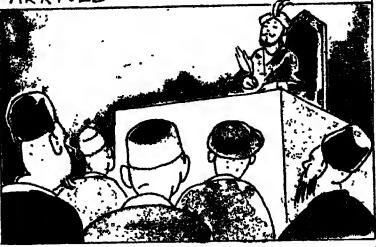
SIX MONTHS LATER THE WASHERMAN RETURNED TO THE MAULY!

> MY DEAR FELLOW! YOUR ASS IS NOW! THE KAZI OF BENARES. YOU'D BETTER GO AND MEET HIM THERE.





IN BENARES, THE KAZI WAS HOLDING COURT WHEN THE WASHERMAN ARRIVED.















HERE they go again!" sighed Mrs. Mehta. putting down her sewing and gazing upon the scene before her with mild exasperation in her eyes. Spot and Silky were busily engaged in yet another one of their innumerable cat-and-dog fights, this time in the literal sense of the term. Spot was a huge Alsatian with brown and black fur, while Silky the cat derived her name from the sheen of her black and white coat. Spot was, at the moment, chasing Silky all over the living room of the Mehtas,

upsetting many an article of furniture in the process.

"Woof! Woof!" barked Spot loudly.

"Meow," said Silky, and jumped right on top of Mr. Mehta, who was reading the morning paper, seated in the most comfortable armchair in the room.

"Now this is really the limit!" snapped Mr. Mehta. "I have a good mind to get rid of these two! Tell Raju to take one of these noisy animals out of here, before I take a stick to them."

Mrs. Mehta, smiled at

him and left the room. In a moment, Raju, their twelve-year-old-son, appeared and led Spot away, out of sight of his father's eyes, out of the house into the open air.

"Why must you both always be at each other's throats?" Raju admonshed the Alastian, as he ran down the road, Spot gambolling silently by his side. Spot had been given to Raju as a birthday present by his parents at the age of eight, and boy and dog had become very attached to each other in the last four years. A few months ago, Raju had been taking Spot for a

walk one evening in the neighbourhood, when he noticed a small blackand-white cat following them, mewing plaintively. At first Raju had ignored the animal, but the latter had followed the pair in front of her right upto Raju's house itself, and had settled down on the Mehtas' doorstep. Mrs. Mehta, opening the front door for the milk early next morning, was surprised to see the cat, which followed her. purring and rubbing itself against her legs, into the kitchen inside

"Why, it's the same cat which followed Spot and me last evening," exclaimed Raju in surprise, as Mrs Mehta gave it a little milk in a saucer. "Can we keep her for a pet, Mummy? Do say yes!"

"Well. we have no objection," said Mrs. Mehta, and Mr. Mehta nodded agreement, both of them being animal lovers. But Spot had barked loudly in protest, and advanced threateningly upon the cat, a strange rumbling sound coming from his throat.

"Spot! You are a bad dog not to make friends with Silky," said Raju angrily, as the cat arched her back and spat at the huge Alsatian in return. "Silky is what we will call her—her coat is so soft and smooth."

One day, hearing Silky mewing loudly and rushing about in circles around the room in a troubled manner, Raju and his parents were puzzled at her behaviour. The mystery was solved when Raju's father spied three large white bones reposing innocently in the cat's cane basket, looking oddly out of place in the cat's sanctuary.

"Spot! Quick, come

here!" yelled Mr. Mehta.
"Is this your handiwork,
you naughty dog? You
know how particular
cats are about their
resting place."

Spot wagged his tail, and whined as if to say, "What did I do wrong?", while Silky looked ready to scratch the dog's eyes out. This was the beginning of their many physical skirmishes. The battle lines were drawn, and war declared.

The threat of getting rid of Spot and Silky had, of course, no effect on the two pets, and their battle royal continued, upsetting the household. One day, the Alsatian was bullying the smaller feline animal ceaselessly, when Silky decided she had had enough. Claws out and teeth bared in anger, she rushed at Spot in direct attack, confusing and frightening the big dog. The two of them finally rushed out of the house, Spot ahead, with Silky in hot pursuit.

"Let us hope they stay out for some time, and let us enjoy some peace," growled Mr. Mehta.

But when twenty minutes had elapsed and there was no sight or sound of them, even Raju's father started getting restless Suddenly Silky the cat rushed in, and mewing loudly, walked back and forth repeatedly from Raju's chair to the front door.

"Silky is trying to tell us something, Daddy." said Raju "I wonder where Spot is."

"Let us follow the cat and find out what she wants," said Mrs. Mehta, and the three of them followed Silky into a corner of the garden.

Spot lay on the ground, a wooden beam from the roof of the Mehtas' garage fallen across his right foreleg,

which was bleeding profusely. He was making little whining noises, and appeared very weak and frightened.

"Oh, it was good of you to call us to Spot's help, Silky," cried Raju, stroking the cat.

"He needs medical attention," said Mr. Mehta.
"Let us carry him into the house, and I'll telephone for the vet."

When the Alsatian's paw was treated and bandaged, and peace prevailed once more, even Mr. Mehta had a word of praise for Silky the cat's prompt action in coming to the dog's aid.

"A friend in need is a friend indeed, Spot," he said, patting the Alsatian's head. "Thank your brave preserver, now."

The big dog looked at Silky and wagged his tail slowly. The cat looked a little sheepish, puzzled that Spot should be grateful to her for her help.

That was the beginning of an uneasy truce between the two animals. Spot was forced to lie still in one place and rest his injured leg, and could not trouble the cat, even if he wanted to. Silky too, seeming at a loose end without the provoking behaviour of the dog, did not wander about the house so much, but preferred to sleep most of the time in her basket.

"The house is much quieter now," remarked Raju's mother one day. "Silky is getting lazy—'look how fat she has become!"

Even though Spot recovered from his accident, there was no more of the usual enemity between the two animals, much to the joy of their twelveyear-old master. Cat and dog seemed to be coming to terms with each other.

One morning, the day dawned with dark cloudy skies, and the ominous promise of an impending storm. As the weather grew sultry and humid, Silky grew more and more restless, and Spot too, seemed uneasy. Raju's father retired to his study to look at some papers, and his mother settled down for a nap. Raju too, sprawled in the old arm chair with half a dozen comics to read, in an effort to shut out the rain and thunder.

As the storm reached its height, neither of the animals were to be seen anywhere. It stopped raining only towards the evening.

Raju wandered out into the garden outside, wanting to stretch his legs, having fallen asleep in the big armchair amidst the comics during the afternoon. A moment later, a loud shout from him brought both Mr. and Mrs. Mehta rushing to his side, wondering what had happened.

"Oh, look Mummy, look Daddy!" yelled Raju in a frenzy of delight. "Look at what is in Spot's kennel!"

The pink satin cloth which was usually in the cat's basket was draped

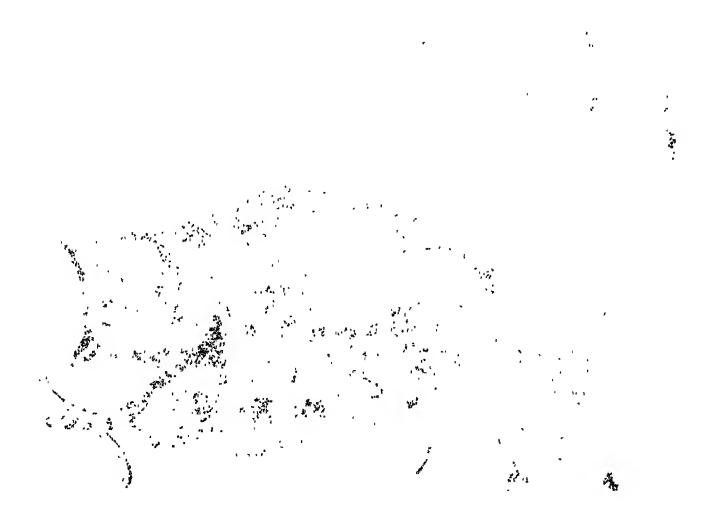
on the floor of the kennel, and resting on it were three tiny kittens; one yawning, one mewing softly, and the third making some sort of a face at the watching human audience. Silky lay in the kennel beside her little ones, and Spot stood on guard outside, looking very pleased with himself.

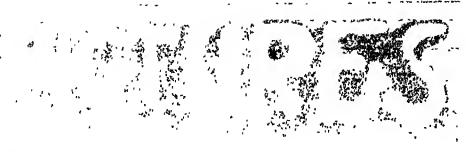
"Was it not good of Spot to help Silky have her kittens during the storm in his own kennel, Mummy?" cried Raju excitedly.

"Yes, indeed," replied Mrs. Mehta. "One good turn deserves another, and Spot has not forgotten Silky's help when he injured his leg. No wonder Silky seemed so bulky recently."

"What do you think of the latest addition to the family, Spot?" said Mr. Mehta, looking at the Alsatian.

Spot licked Silky's face, looked at the kittens in his kennel, and wagged his tail rapidly. "Woof! Woof!" he barked, seeming to say, "How could I ever have disliked cats so? The more the merrier!





By Urmila Chakraborty Each picture is a girl's name. Can you guess the names?

Each picture is descriptive of the word for it. How good is your guess?



Text: Devika Rangachari

Illustrations: Chaitali Chatteries

HE most momentous day of my life was when I firmly turned my back on the school laboratories and vowed to exclude science from any further academic pursuits of mine. This was not an impulsive decision, but one that I had been nurturing since my first unhappy introduction to the Fearsome Trio-Physics, Chemistry and Biologythat caused me many a night of anxiety and trepidation and from which I managed to extricate myself just before I became a nervous wreck!

Chemistry was easily the worst of the lot. I used to enter the lab and view the rows of testtubes and Bunsen burners with a heavy, despairing heart. The characteristic smell within was not exactly conducive to positive thinking and used to arouse my worst instincts. While my enthusiastic colleagues pounced eagerly on the salt of the day and feverishly watched for results as they poured unnamed acids into their tubes. I used to wander around miserably, trying to discern an intelligible explanation for the hectic

activity around me.

My memories of those days are liberally dosed with tragic incidents test-tubes falling from my nerveless grasp and breaking. The ugly mixture in my tube stubbornly refusing to react in the prescribed manner, the "pop" sound of hydrogen resounding in my ears when it had no business to be there at all and finally, a gaping hole in my lab, coat that bore testimony to the fact that acid and cloth are not the best of friends. I managed to acquire the dubious distinction of being the only student

who was unable to identify the simplest salt without a bevy of sympathetic colleagues to egg me on and a furious teacher, who directed looks of withering contempt on me and my feeble attempts to master the secrets of the science.

Physics was also something I shrank from. My association with it was doomed from the start and after a few fruitless tries. I retired from the battle. I managed fairly well with a ruler and pin. though this had to be performed in absolute secrecy, as it was strictly forbidden. Even now, the sight of a prism or glass block makes me want to cry out in terror. Elementary experiments like balancing weights were beyond my comprehension. Thus I whiled away my hours in the Physics lab. watching the clock diligently.

Biology, the least of the

three evils, presented a somewhat friendlier aspect. But its true colours were revealed to me on the day I chanced to view a cockroach through a magnifying glass. Petrified and shocked into silence, I was never the same again! I failed to share my colleagues' enthusiasm for the entrails of a fish. rat or other loathsome creature. I shall never forget the "chloroformed" cockroaches, that decided to take a morning walk in mid-session and unleashed such a reign of terror that I knew that the world could hold no more shocks for me.

Besides, Biology all but destroyed my sense of aesthetics, for I could never view a flower without wondering frantically as to its species, genus and other distressing family details. I soon became a byword in the Science department and the teachers used to grow pale whenever they sighted me. Though I managed to clear my Science papers with honours, I suspect the teachers of conniving to secure these marks for me, to preclude the possibility of my returning to haunt their precious labs again.

I cannot quell a certain gloating, triumphant feeling that steals over me everytime I hear of my colleagues scurrying to and fro in the labyrinth of Science, while I spend my time in a calm and delightful perusal of Literature and its mysteries. My lab is my room and my raw material is my book and the results are every bit as explosive, thrilling and satisfying. As far as I'm concerned, one has simply got to master the art of staying away from science!



ANSWERS TO ANAGRAM - CROSS WORD

(See page 25)

¹ A	R	² S	0	³ N		⁴ E	Α	⁵ R	Z	6 E	5	7
C		Ω		I		2		Ш		7		A
8	A	R		⁹ T	1	L	E	S		10	0	P
R		A		R		Α		E		E		E
11 E	×	H	α	A		12 C	A	_	E	Q	E	R
S				7		E				I		
S	Α	14	H	E	T		15 S	16 P	A	C	Ш	17 R
		0				18 C		Α				E
19 F	L	U	(i)	20	E	ď		21 S	7	22 A	L	L
E		Z		A		0		T		5		I
23 A		Т		24 	כ	O	d	E		25 P	E	A
5		E		0		C		R		£		7
²⁶	Н	R	0	7	E	S		27 N	0	7	E	T

ANSWERS TO NAME PICTURES

(See page 44)

Riddima; Savitri; Deepti; Sujata; Shilpa

II

Swan: Cup: Jerry:
Boy Scout: A Mouse: Cake
CHILDREN'S WORLD SEPTEMBER 1993



SWAMI VIVEKANANDAS "SECRET OF SUCCESS"

Text: Niranjan M. Khilnani Illustration: Sahana Pal

FTER addressing the "Parliament of Religions" on September 11, 1893, Swamiji took a walk, and came a cross a group of students. He told them "attaining success is a natural sequence in one's life. If you cling to a certain thought with dynamic will-power, it finally assumes a tangible outward form. Carrying a thought with dynamic will-power means holding to it, until that thought

pattern develops dynamic force. When a thought is made dynamic by willforce, it can create or rearrange the atoms into the desired pattern according to the mental blueprint you have created." Swami Vivekananda then said: "Always think big and one day you will become big." In this dynamic process of self advancement, "every individual action counts: no human thought or action is ever wasted. As

soon as an individual's attention is focused, the power or all powers will come and with that you can achieve spiritual, mental and material success."

He continued: "Our individual actions do make a difference. Don't feel that you are powerless or insignificant in effecting a change in what may appear to be "overwhelming" obstacles or a major crisis in your life. Everything you do or feel or think makes a difference."

THE MOTHER'S CHILD

Swati Banerjee (15)

A pure black soul was kept tred by a dirty white rope in a cell of torture. The tongue tried to speak out but its voice vibrated within the four walls

The nose could not pierce the strings of hatred that circled it

The nose was suffocated by the punyent smell of discrimination all around.

The skin could perceive only the lashes of torture

And the thunder of ignorance turned the ear deaf

Thus the five senses, crushed under pressure, grew weaker and weaker as time passed by,

But the hollowness of brutality made the heart under and under until the ropes started sliding from its ends

As the soul started wandering in the darkness of the cell,

A melancholy mouning sound flowed towards the ears,

And the eyes came upon hundreds of other pitiful souls,

Who were denied the rights of a human being.

Suddenly the past reflected back in his mind,

A little baby tried to envision the world from its mother's lap,

Then a youth with a clear fancy tried to grasp all the beauties of the wide unknown world,

But at the entrance the bright hope of the youth was darkened by the dark colour of his skin.

A white barrier stood in the way denying him the rights of a human.

Enveloped prejudice, the youth ran to his mother!

To hide his burning face in the coolness

of her lap.

The mother as always a divine image of tolerance and kindness.

With her tender hand wiped off the sweat of confusion, snobbery and sorrow! And directed the attention of the child to herds of black men led by a few white men with whips in hand.

Which were as inhuman as their masters.

Thus was the rise of a new inspiration,
a new hope in the child of mother,
He was determined to earn the rights of
millions of black men as a human.

For he said. 'Men are born equal'
And from then on, he stopped not until
he found himself tied by a white rope
in a dark cell of torture!

What remains of him now is only his heart.

The other senses being curbed by terror denying them the right to express themselves.

And in a flash the present returned to him,

He cried out Rights! Rights! with his ailing tongue,

And a drop of blood ran out of his mouth! His eyes moistened,

And his heart asked, 'Is it over?'
No, No were the noises from near and
distant lands.

'Then I can sleep in peace in my mothers' lap,' said he.

And a large tear rolled down from the child's cheek,

This time diluted with blood.

(Courtesy SICC)

ADVENTURE AND MYSTERY

THE DUTCH RUINS
By Del Manuel
Price: Rs. 30

TEDDY MAKES A FRIEND
By Swapna Dutta
Price: Rs. 30
Both published by Harper
Collins Publishers India
Pvt. Ltd.

WHAT IS SCIENCE By Dilip M. Salwi Price: Rs. 40 Published by Rupa & Co.

Holidays bring forth adventure and mystery in story books And so it happens to Rusty and Marilyn spending a holiday at Palmyra Flantation in the small seaside town of Berrapatnam, Sanjay, Rajini and Bondo, local children, take them to the Dutch Ruins, where "among the decrepit archways and crumbling walls overgrown with weeds and jungle, the present seemed to vanish, the atmosphere seemed heavy with the past". Here Sanjay tells the others how he thinks the ruins could

be a meeting place for pirates. As it turns out, the ruins is where smugglers carry out their nefarious activities. Not successfully in this instance as the children play their part in bringing the guilty to book

The Dutch Rums is a well-written believable, thoroughly enjoyable book Everything happens fast and there is nothing superfluous or contrived about this book. The cover illustration seems amateurish in comparison to the contents.

Ina and Tina are upset The house next door where they romped freely, has been bought There are two children in the family who could be "prim and proper or wild and unruly or spoilt and affected or What is worse they have a cat and a dog, a "silly Spaniel" How will Teddy. the girls' Alsatian, react? Fortunately for everyone, after some initial coldness. the children become virtually inseparable and

Teddy makes a friend, too.

Teddy Makes a Friend comprises four stories about Teddy and his young mistresses and their friends. In 'Teddy Saves the Day'. the Alsatian unwittingly saves the spaniel Floppy's pup from finding a home with Miss Pakrashi who "ran a welfare centre of orts" but had "the reputation of being extremely tightfisted where food and living conditions were concerned". The four friends' attempts at playing de'ectives come to naught in 'The Detective Duo' Chuk-chuk and Pompom do not think that the poet, a lodger in their outhouse, will make a suitable uncle Teddy is instrumental in sending him packing in 'Teddy and the Poet' This is an interesting collection though one wishes there were more stories to it. The book could do with a more exciting cover and the illustrations a lot more heart.

At the outset one must

mention that whatever the contents, What is Science is a well-produced book. An attractive cover, large type, plenty of interlinear spacing, illustrations in the lighter vein and a handy size, all prompt one to pick up the book at first glance.

Dilip Salwi is at it again-bringing science to the younger generation through stories and articles. In this book he endeavours to remove misconceptions about science in the minds of students like Romi who think it is "The systematic knowledge which has to be crammed and reproduced in examinations". He knows all the formulas and definitions without understanding the parameters Romi's father

is not very different in this regard and hardly of any help to his son. But when Romi incets his father's friend, Dr. Ashok Padhye, his concept of science undergoes a sea change and he develops an interest in the subject.

Dr. Padhye explains to Romi what science is -its meaning, aspects. ramifications, about scientists and even science writers, scientific institutions, the scientific temper, et al, with examples and quotations. Important points in the text are printed in bold letters. For instance, "But science is not simply a subject like history, civics, law etc., it is a "healthy process " criticism is a must for the growth of science"

"Science is an ideal but people who practise it are often not idealists; they are humans, made of flesh and blood, with human weakness for money, power and fame".

The conversational style of the book seems contrived with the breaks being provided by tea and biscuits. Even so, the author has to be lauded for his effort in popularising science through Dr. Padhye May there be many who develop an interest in science and a scientific temper with the help of this book, for are not these the need of the hour?

Bhavana Nair

A Request to my Present

Please don't pass away,
Stay with me always.
For you've brought the best with you
O my dear, present days

Please don't leave me, Please don't change My rainbow of joys, A charming range

My carefree youth. The sun and rain,

And all the fun, Mann't come again.

I say, don't go, Although I know, Surely, the future will show.

May be happy, may be sad In domay, it may be clad Then my only joy will be.
All the happiness that I've had.

Vaishali Sinha (14)

PEN-FRIENDS CORNER

Those who wish to enrol themselves as members of the Children's World Penfriends Club may do so by sending us the accompanying form. Cut out the form, fill up the details neatly, and mail it to us. As the form helps in indexing preservation of records, its use is a MUST. All those who send in their particulars in the form will get priority in enrolment. Limit your hobbies and choice of countries to have pento TWO. friends from Whenever members write to their pen-friends it will be advisable to mention their member-number

P. Kiran Raj (boy, 14)
H.No. 10-15, Temple Alwal
Secunderabad 500010
Andhra Pradesh, India
Stamps, making friends
U.S.A., U.K.

5722
Bijayata Bagdas (girl, 12)
Class V-A
Chang Gang Khan
Primary School
Thimphu. Bhutan
Coins

5723
P. Krishnan (b, 15)
S/o R P Palanivel
Erode Chemical Suppliers

India

21, Kamang Road
Erode 638001, Tamil Nadu
India
Electronics, reading
Any country

Rashneet (g. 13)
A-37 Derawal Nagar
Delhi 110009, India
Reading, playing
Any country

5725
Lavin Hawes (b, 8)
33 Anandha Nagar
('heran Salai, Trichy 690021
Tamil Nadu, India
Singing, stamps
Any country

CHILDREN'S WORLD PEN-FRIENDS CLUB ENROLMENT FORM						
Member No (To be filled	d by office) Issue dated					
Name: Master/Miss (IN BLOCK LETTERS)						
Address:						
Hobbies:						
Pen-friend wanted in (Country)						
* Age limst · 16 years	Signature					

5726
Anuja Moni (g, 10)
"Sree Krishna"
Mukkothl Temple Road
Poonthurba, Cochin
Kerala, India
Painting, reading
Japan, Germany

5727
Ryan Hawes (b, 10)
33 Anandha Nagar
Cheran Salai, Trichy 620021
Tamil Nadu, India
Reading, stamps
Any country

5728
Kiran Mahuto (g. 12)
C/o Shuvjee Mahuto
Near Milan Talkies
At/PO Rajgengpur 770017
Dist Sundargarh, Orissa
India
Reading, stamps
U.S.A

5729
Stephen K Moonsang
Gangte (b 14)
West Wind, Molhoi Road
Haflong 783819
N.C Hills, Assam, India
Rugby, Martial arts
Any country

5730
Shailini Kolian (g. 13)
Punit Nagar, 4/2, 26
Plot No. 3
S.V Road, Borivli (West)
Bombay, India
Reading, writing stories
Other than India

5731
Rajesh Kumar (b, 16)
Vikas Hostel Room No 125
S.D.M. School
Sonipat 131001
Haryana, India
Pho ography, stamps
Any country

5732 Sonali Sharma (g, 13) B-15, Soami Nagar New Delhi 110017, India Reading, music Germany Canada

5733
S. Hari Ramakrishna
(b. 16)
45-B, Venkatakrishna
Road
R.S. Purain, Combatore
Tamil Nadu, India
Pen-friends, stamps
Any country

5734
Bela Bagdas (g. 16)
Yaugchen Phug High
School
Thimphu Bhutan
Music, making friends
Any country

5735
Unnikuttan B. (b. 9)
Aiswarya
Peokkathupady Aluva
Kerala, India
Stamps reading
USA Kuwait

5736 V Bhayana (g 13 162 Eldams Road, Teynampet Madras 600018 Tamil Nadu, India Stamps, coins USA, Switzerland

5737
Lestor Smith (b, 9)
Loyola School
P.O. Box-17, Kohima 797001
Nagaland, India
Stamps, coins
Any country

5738
Sowmya Murthy (g, 9)
C o Lt Col MS, Suresh
75/6 A. Jhoke Road
Ferozepur Cantt
Punjab, India
Music, painting
USA, Canada

5739
Prashant R. Babu (b, 12)
7. Madhay Kutir
Off 7th Road, Rajawadi
Near Somaiya College
Bombay 400022, MS, India
Stamps, sports
Any country

5740
Tshering Delma (g, 15)
Class V. Ura Primary
School
Jakar P O Bumthang Dist.
Bhu'an
Dance, music
U K New Zealand.

5741
Nipun Sinha (b, 11)
DIG's Residen e
Hisar Range, Hisar
Haryana India
Swimming, music
Any country

5742
Pema Wangmo (g. 16)
Class V, Ura Primary
School
Jakar P.O. Bumthang Dist.
Bhutan
Dancing, music
Any country

5743
Biplab Biswas (b, 13)
Q.No. F/VII-13 P.O.
Chandrapura
CTP.S. 825303
Di Bokaro, Bihar, India
Stamps reading jokes
U.S.A., Japan

5744
Dechen Peldon (g. 16)
Class V, Ura Primary
School
Jakar P O Bumthang Dist
Bhutan
Songs, dance
Any country

5745
Shantanu (b. 11)
C/o J N.V Bloomsdel
P.O. Chouldari
S. Andanian 744103
Andaman & Nicobar, India
Music, painting
Any country

5746
Lhaden Mo (g. 15)
Class V. Ura Primary
School
Jakar, P.O. Bumthang Dist.
Bhutan
Dance, music

Ireland, Switzerland

Jamphel Tenzin (b, 14)
T.R.L. Settlement
House No. 25, Camp 'B'
Gompura, Hunsur Taluk
Dist. Mysore 571188
Karnataka, India
Comics, writing letters
U.S.A., Germany

5748
Sakhi Gurung (g, 16)
Motithang High School
Thimphu, Bhutan
Music, making friends
Any country

5749
Kunzang Thinley (b, 14)
Class V, Ura Primary
School
Jakar, PO. Bumthang Dist.
Bhutan
Football, music
India, Nepal

5750
Zoya Bhatia (g, 13)
2-A Anubhav Apartments
Sector-13 Plot-13, Rohim
Delhi 110085, India
Reading knitting
India, USA

5751
Rajat (b, 14)
B/3 95 C Lawrence Road
New Delhi 110035, India
Match boxes, sports
Any country

5752
Deepawali Prakash (g. 11)
A 67, Defence Colony
Meerul, U.P., India
Reading, swimming
India, Switzerland

5753
Minjur Tshering (b, 15)
Class V, Ura Primary
School
Jakar, P.O. Bumthang Dist.
Bhutan
Football
India, Nepal

5754
Neha Chadha (g. 11)
B-1/1852 Vasant Kunj
New Delhi 110030, India
Swimming, reading
Bhutan, Japan

5755
Sandeep Kedia (b. 16)
51-A Kamla Nagar
Basant Bhawan
Delhi 110007, India
Chess, making friends
Any country

5756
Bernie Rego (g, 11)
St Joseph's Convent
Panchgani, Dt
Satara 412805 Maharashtra
India
Dancing, singing
Other than India

M. Viplar Kiran Reddy
(b, 15)
C/o Mr. M. Krishna Reddy
H No C 7-43, BNR Colony
Vanasthalipuram, Hyderabad
Andhra Pradesh 500061
Chess
Any country
5758
Reji (g, 10)
TC/41/107 Padanay Lane

Manacaud

Thiruvananthapuram 695009 Kerala, India Reading, stamps U.K., U.S.A. 5759 Pankaj Katia (b, 13)

Pankaj Katia (b, 13)
Pen-friends, music
H. No. 7, Sector 7
Panchkula 134109
Haryana, India
Stamps, collecting postcards
Any country

F/5-8 C.T P S D.V.C.

5760
Sugandh Tuli (g, 9)
B-3/96-B Lawrence Road
New Delhi 110035. India
Dancing, pen-friends
Any country

Agnibha Das (b, 13)
Qr No. D-117
P O. Chandrapura
Dt Bokaro 825303
Bihar, India
Music, story books
U K, India

5762
S. Anusha (g, 12)
D/103/2 Kumaran Nagar
Doctor's Colony, Salem-5
Tamil Nadu 636005, India
Reading, chess
Singapore

5763
M. Harsha Vardhan (b, 11)
C/o Mr M. Govardhan Rao
H. No. 1-1404, Pedhakoneti
Street
Mangalagiri
Andhra Pradesh 522503
India
Reading, sports
Japan, U.S.A.

Rezeena Syangbo (g, 16)
Class XI Arts
St. Zavier's School
P.O. Pakyong
East Sikkim 737106
Pen-friends, music
Any country

Debayan Mondal (b, 12) F/5-8 C.T.P.S.D.V.C. P.O. Chandrapura Bokaro 825303, Bihar, India Drawing, playing guitar France, India

5766
Huma Anan Ahemad (g. 7)
4 '2 Sisters Qrs
P O. New Forest, F R.I
Dehra Dun 248006, U P
India
Reading, drawing
Any country

5767
Ravesh Arora (b, 15)
217, B Baba Faridpuri
26 Block, West Patel Nagar
New Delhi 110008, India
Stamps, pen-friends
Any country

5768
Shubhra Das (g. 10)
E-819, CR. Park Market
No. 2
New Delhi 110019, India
Drawing, sports
UK., U.S.A.

5769
H.Sreekar (b, 12)
VIII-A Rotary English
Medium School,
Ranibennur

Karnataka 581115, India Cricket, painting India, U.S.A.

5770
Sonali S. Shah (g, 16)
D. o Mr. S. Shah
Raghavendra Talkies
Mudhol 587313, Bijapur
Karnataka, India
Stamps and coins
Any country

5771
Harshat Jain (b, 11)
70, Arihant Nagar
Punjabi Bagh
Delhi 110026, India
Coins, stamps
U.S.A., U.K.

5772
Sujal Parulekar (g. 15)
R.B.I. Staff Qtrs.
L-66, 3rd Floor
Rombay 400008
Maharashtra, India
Reading, travelling
U.S.A., Japan

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C'o Bhabataran Roy
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Drawing, stamps
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Reading, writing
U.K., India

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Karan Harjar (b. 13)
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Cycling, dancing
UK, Japan

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Aparna Bharathan (g. 12)
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Reading, dancing
Any country

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Reading, drawing
India, Japan

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Punjab. India

Music, reading Any country

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India, U.K

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Switzerland, Italy

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Reading, poetry writing
Any country

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Jai Tripathi (b. 14)

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Painting, dancing
U K, U.S.A

5787
Abhi Rajasekharan (b, 11)
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Kerala 691506, India
Reading, stamps
Any country

5788
Niyati J Shah (g, 11)
B/2 'Deval', 30 Damubhai
Colony
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Gujarat, India
Dance, drawing
Japan France

5789
Ashish R Deshpande
(b, 16)
C/o Mr. Ravindra A.
Deshpande
A-1 Samartha Nagar
24 C Majas Road
Jogeshwari East
Bombay 400060, India
Stamps and coins, making
pen-friends
U.K., Canada

C'/o Mr D.P. Tripathi

(Sr. Manager)



Tiger In A Flap

This four month old Siberian tiger cub, one of a pair is being hand reared at Howlett's Wild Animal Park in Kent, Southern England. Here, the cub tries climbing out of a domestic cat-flap!

(Photograph cointesy BIS)

Coffee EEE!! O#@ E#"

No, IT'S TOFFEE!!_

-

THE ARGUMENT CONTINUES ..

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Circulation & Advertisements A.J. Jeseph C.P. Ravindran

Area Representatives BOMBAY C.H. Viswaneth 502-A, Arun Chambers, 5th Floor, 317, Shahid Bhagat Singh Road,

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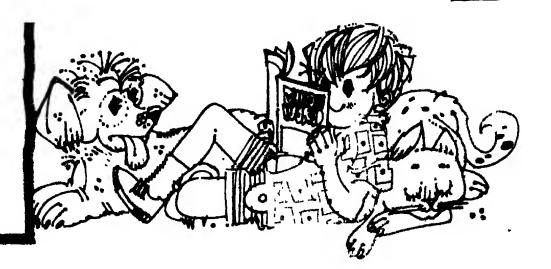
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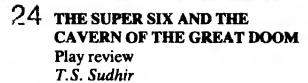
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Animal conservation story to mark
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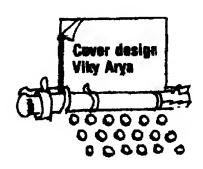
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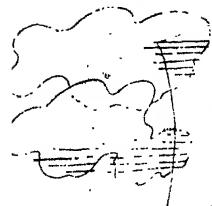






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... Dear Editor



UNIVERSAL ANTHEM

My country has no boundary.

My country has no sentry.

My country covers continents all.

My country embraces oceans all.

My country has just one flag.

Let's call it—'Universal Flag'.

On my 'made in world' organ
I play that anthem with all my heart.
Let mankind sing with me
This 'UNIVERSAL ANTHEM



Sheona Sauna Pune

It is that time of the year again. When dawn takes her time breaking into the skies and dusk hastens to draw its twilight blanket in one swift sweep. The time nevertheless, when one happily inhales great gustsful of cool, almost refreshing air-that is, the portion that has not been taken over by exhaust fumes, dust and dirt particles. Breathing in, comes easy after the gasping stillness of the past few hot months when the stale air would be laden with overpowering odours.

It is the time when, wherever they are present, heady fragrances of the night-queen or raat ki-rani, and tuberoses and the beautiful pariyat or har-shringar fill the night air.

The mood turns gentler, reflective—thoughts dwell on the triumph of good over evil. It is appropriate perhaps that when the elements, the weather, the skies, all unite to put magic into the night air, the celebration of the nine nights should also come within the scope of this period.

After the summer holidays, this is the first break from school routine and one welcomes it, to renew energy and creativity and recharge the driving forces of ambition and achievement. For, effort above all counts the rewards, the fruit comes

. Dear

rs

in different shapes and sizes and at unexpected times. If we expect to be in line to receive - then it is not too unnatural to expect that one will give as well. A kind word, a helpful gesture, a task made easy for another, maybe for mother, brother, teacher... Such is the rich bounty of childhood that one can give and lose not-but gather and gain. It costs nothing to give of sweet words, kindness and caring, so why not make the most of this magical season to truly make this a beautiful time?

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The Festival of Nine Nights
Text: Jaya Paramasivan
Illustrations: B.G. Varma

NOWN the world over for its rich cultural traditions our country has a number of colourful festivals celebrated with enthusiasm and gaiety. One of these is the festival celebrated in the bright fortnight (or Shuklapaksha) in September-October. It is Durga Puja or Dussera as it is popularly known in the north, and is known in the south as Navaratri (nine nights).

It is said that once the three worlds were rocked by the atrocities committed by the wicked demons and even the Trinity (Brahma, Vishnu, Mahesh) were themselves helpless against their might. The trinity then bestowed their combined powers on the Shakti aspect of Goddess Parvati and requested Her to challenge and destroy the evil forces. Accordingly the mighty Shakti aspect of Devi Durga, riding the



powerful lion, fought and destroyed the demons.

The nine days of Navaratri are celebrated in worshipping the three aspects of the Goddess -Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswati. The first three days are dedicated to the Goddess of Power and

CHILDREN'S WORLD OCTOBER 1993

Courage Durga, the next three days to the Goddess of Wealth and Prosperity Lakshmi, and the last three days to the Goddess of Wisdom and Literature, Saraswati. The final day Vijayadasami is celebrated to mark the great Victory of Durga over the evil forces.

A special feature of the festival as celebrated in the south is the display of attractive dolls tastefully arranged on decorative steps in individual houses. Earlier these were all traditionally made in clay depicting various scenes from the epics and puranas. Models of deities and characters from the legends were also displayed. With the changing times, porcelain dolls and later plastic ones also became popular.

The idea behind the "dolls festival" is to remind human beings that the power behind creation and the sustenance of every living being, is the one and only Supreme Power—the Great Mother Shakti. The dolls symbolise all living beings.

It is believed that in the first three days the warring aspect of the ferocious Goddese Durga, riding the mighty lion, rears with fary
(Hoomkaar) and with
every war ary of Hers,
millions of smaller goddesses of valour are
produced from Her eyes
and nose to form columns
of troops to fight the
demons. She is in Her
most terrifying form.

Gradually over the next three days she becomes calmer as she assumes the form of Lakshmi, the Goddess of Wealth and Prosperity showering blessings on all living beings and finally during the last three days she is serene and full of compassion as the Goddess of Wisdom and Literature— Saraswati conferring wisdom on her devotees. She emerges as Vijaya the victorious, on the tenth day Vijayadasamı.

On the ninth day,
Navami, when she is
worshipped as Saraswati,
books, musical instrument and implements of
all kinds of arts are
tastefully arranged and
prayers are offered to Her
to bless them with success
in their field of work.

Little children are initiated into literacy on Vijayadasami day. Rice is spread on a platter and the child's finger guided by elders holding their hand, to write the first

alphabet. This auspicious commonly is called Vidyarambam (beginning of education).

Navaratri is celebrated with great joy, mainly by women and girl children. They dress up on all the nine days in their colourful best and visit each others houses to view the display of dolls, partake in singing, exchange of greetings and the offerings of sweet and savouries. The presiding deities in temples are decorated lavishly in rich costumes and jewellery. which attract large crowds.

According to tradition the Goddess Durga was believed to be a Mridu Bakshini, that is She loved soft sweets. So people used to prepare sweets out of different cereals and legumes cooked well with molasses, coconut, sugar and ghee. But later on with changing tastes variations were added to the traditional offerings.

On the next page are a few recipes that you may like to try.





Til ladoos:

Ingredients:

1 cup of til seeds sesame seeds (white)

11/4 cup of gur (jaggery broken and powdered-)

Cardamoms: 5-6 powdered

Method:

- 1. Pick clean til seeds and roast till golden brown in a kadaı.
- 2. Remove and grind into a powder.
- 3. (The powder will be equal to the measure of the gur). Add the powdered gur and cardamoms to the til and whisk it in the mixie till it is well mixed (one or two turns will do).
- 4. The mixture will be soft enough to make into balls. Store them in an airtight container. It keeps well for many days.



Ingredients:

2 or 3 oz cream cheese (chhena)

4 cups powdered sugar

2 table spoons cocoa

1\2 tea spoon vanilla essence

A pinch of salt

1\2 cup chopped cashew nuts.

Method:

- 1. Mash the cheese and mix in the sugar.
- 2. Add cocoa and mix thoroughly, kneading





with palms.

- 3. Add salt, vanilla and nuts and mix well.
- 4. Grease an 8"x8"x2" pan or tray and press the mixture into it.
- 5. Leave it in the refrigerator until it sets hard. Cut into pieces.



Chocolate Butter Squares

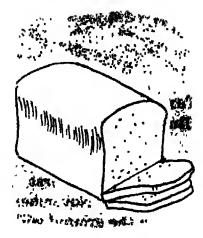
Ingredients:

4 or 5, 1" thick slices of bread

- 1 cup sugar
- 1 tablespoon cocoa
- 3 tablespoon margarine or butter
 - 6 tablespoons milk
- 1 cup grated coconut or finely chopped nuts.

Method:

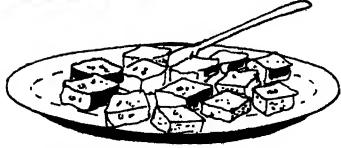
- 1. Remove the crust of bread.
- 2. Cut the slices into small squares and leave aside.



- 3. Put the rest of the ingredients except the coconut and nuts, in a pan and boil for 3 minutes.
- 4. Remove from fire. Cool till warm.
- 5. Dip the pieces of bread in the mixture and lightly roll it in the plate spread with grated coconut and nuts.
- 6. Arrange in a tray to dry. Serve when dry.









Text: Thangam Krishnan Illustrations: B.G. Varma

ESTIVALS in India mark the changing seasons. All of them have some economic, religious, cultural, social and regional significance.

All over India, Dussera is celebrated with great enthusiasm and devotion. This is the time when the activities in the farming sector are at a low key. In the northern parts of India the fields which were flush with kharif crops have been harvested and there is a spirit of joy in the air. In the southern parts harvesting of the Kuruwai crop is over and the fields

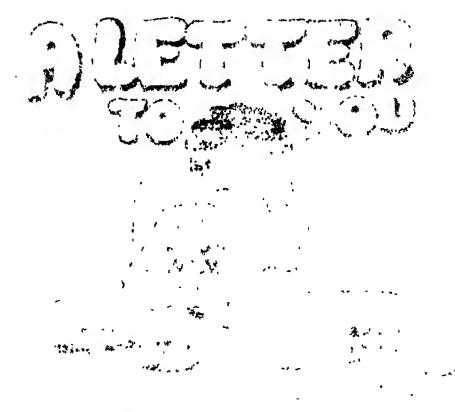
are left bare for sowing, waiting for the first showers in November when the ground will be wet again. Money is available and there is a mood for celebration.

In many parts of India like Assam, Bengal and South India, Dussera is celebrated with pomp and splendour. People buy new clothes, exchange gifts, make social calls and have exquisite feasts. Some go on pilgrimage. There is hectic activity in the economic field. Weavers, potters, artisans, sweetmeat sellers are all busy. It is an interdependent economy. There are

a lot of cultural activities and artistes are busy too.

In eastern India, especially Bengal, new, life-size images of the goddess are made every year. Here she is Mahishasurmardhini, the destroyer of the rakshas Mahishasura. It is more of a community celebration and people throng to take part, in all their finery. Prasad (flowers, sindur and sweets) are distributed to devotees and there are cultural programmes like music, dance, drama etc. On the tenth day or Bijoya the images are immersed in the rivers.





Dear invisibles, inviewibles and wincibles,

I started last time trying to tell you how Raghu has got what he deserves at last. At long last and finally. But I found I had to end the letter on a rather sad note—with my being scolded. Stupid of me! I ought to have written on but my mother... Anyway, I won't go into those unnecessary details now. Let me tell you the rest of the story.

Well, my brother thought Raghu, with a few words had made him 'invincible' so that nobody could see him. And do you know what he was doing at my desk, looking through the drawer? He

was trying to find out where I had kept my new propelling pencil-you know the kind? It has four compartments for four refills-each one a different colour. All one has to do is click the right button and you get the colour you want. Raghu has been eyeing it for a long time, my brother too. They were probably going to share the loot. But I have been too clever for them—the pencil is not in the drawer at all. I keep it somewhere else—and I keep changing the place so that nobody can find it.

Anyway after this great show of 'invincibility' and all that which my mother thought was very 'sweet and funny', there was no

sign of my brother or Raghu for some time. According to my mother, this meant that my brother was 'usefully employed', but what I say is, my brother can never be useful, employed or not. He is the world's most un-useful person in the world, he is about as useful as a rain measure at the bottom of the sea. So when the silence went on into the evening, I began to feel a bit alarmed. According to me, there was mischief brewing. High, difficult mischief.

My mother of course didn't agree with me. She told me I did not need to come to the kitchen, past the fridge to tell me a stupid story about mischief brewing. She told me that she could see me looking at the fridge in a longing kind of way. She told me that whether it was mischief brewing or just coffee, she would not let me get at the mango

ice-cream in the fridge.

Dear I-screams, and you-screams I was hurt. I was badly hurt. I was very badly hurt. I felt my mother had accused me of being a tell-tale and a secret swiper of ice-cream. I might like ice-cream and think of it quite often when I do my homework but I certainly won't think up tales about my brother and Raghu so that I could... Now that I think of it, maybe I could. If my mother had not been in the kitchen.

Anyway, to get back to the story—my mother sent me off to my room where I sat down again to some more mind control. I was trying very hard not to think of mangoes and cold things and to think of equations and corresponding angles when a terrific lot of noise came from near the kitchen. My mother was screaming, so was Raghu. All at the top of their voices. I tried to make out what they were saying but all I could hear was my brother's 'I am invincible'. Finally I gave up trying to control my curiosity and I slipped out of my room and went towards the dining room. The voices were still at their tops, my brother's had almost gone through

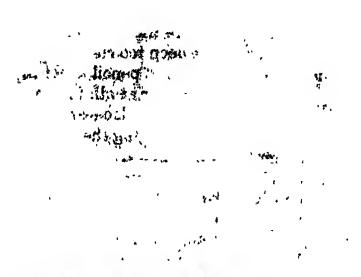
the ceiling. I pretended I had been so deep in my work that I hadn't noticed anything and I bumped into my brother and apologised to the dining table. My brother suddenly screamed even louder. "See! I am invincible. Perky can't see me! See! I AM invincible. And invincible people are supposed to eat ice-cream. It's medicine for them. Ask Raghu!"

"But I can see you," I said in my low, evoluted, top of the ladder Darwinian voice. "I can see you. It's just that I was so deeply into my work that I couldn't see where I was going. I was thinking of the vast and mysterious connections between..."

I saw my mother's glare on me and I stopped abruptly. Instead, I asked, "What is happening here? Has something happened?" Immediately
the hubbub broke open
again, my brother
screamed, my mother
screamed and Raghu
screamed. In the confusion, I opened the fridge
to take out some water
and my hand, by mistake,
opened the freezer. I felt
for the ice-cream carton
and it wasn't there. IT
WASN'T THERE.

I screamed, louder and longer than anyone. I must have tumbled down that ladder of evolution in half a second. But what's a couple of single cell relatives when compared to the loss of half a carton, at least, of mango ice-cream (Mango ice-cream, real mango ice-cream with real mango chunks, the kind that get into your teeth and...).

"The ice-cream," I screamed and everybody else stopped shouting.



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"The mango ice-cream," I shouted again, "it's gone, it's vanished, it's not here!"

And as the full horror of it dawned in the eyes of my brother and my mother, I knew who the thief was, who the swiper of the ice was, who the sickly stealer of the cream was!

"Look," I yelled and pointed a long, dramatic finger. And there, on his shirt front, on Raghu's shirt front was a thick golden trickle of mango with a delicate touch of ice-cream still on it.

"Look!" I said in a whisper this time, in a dramatic whisper. "Look!"

And the eyes of the world, that is, the eyes of my brother and my mother turned and LOOKED and the eyes of my brother and my mother were horror struck. And I found myself feeling suddenly dizzy because my dear, wise friend Prof. Darwin had pulled me up the ladder of evolution, right

up to the top. And there, almost thirty rungs below, in the vast slime of a primitive, prehistorical ocean, wriggled Raghu with a few single cell amoeba floating around him.

I will have to consult my friend Prof. Darwin but as far as I know, nobody can taste mango ice-cream through osmosis.

Waving from the top, the summit of evolution, your PER fect friend

Perky



The rain is failling drop by drop.
it brings freshness to the soul,
relieving it from the scorching heat of the
sun.

Children forget their tensions, get completely drenched in rain.

Feeling released from the summer,

Thank God'! they exclaim.

But oh! they fall prey to colds and coughs.

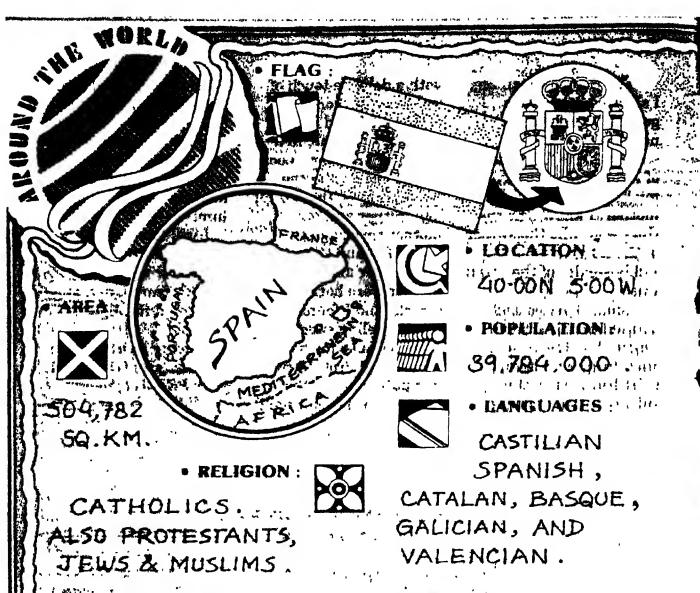
People waiting for buses and rickshaws too enjoy the rain.

The growing crops satisfy the weary farmers

rain proves useful here!

Everyone is satisfied,

Does this make God Almighty feel great?





* CURRENCY: STANDARD TIME:

THE PESETA . NOON GMT- 1 P.M.



RIVERS : GUADALQUIVIR, PYRENEES, SEGURA, TAGUS, MINO, SIERRA NEVADA,

· MOUNTAINS : DOERO, JUCAR , EBRO, CANTABRIAN, SIERRA GUADIANA, SELAA, EO, MORENA...



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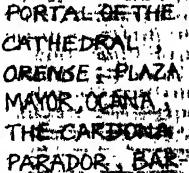
ROYAL MALACE, MADRID; GOLDEN



TYPE OF GOVT DEMOCRATIC STATE WILL CASTLE VALCABOLING

PARLIAMENTARY MONARCHY WELES MONASTERY

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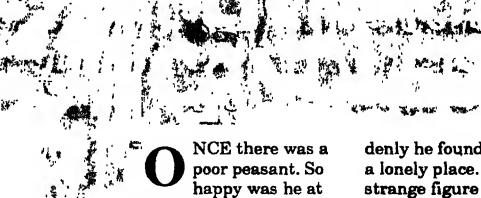
ZAFRA (BADAJOZ)







Story: O.P.Bhagat Illustrations: Subir Roy



NCE there was a poor peasant. So happy was he at the birth of his son that he decided to look for an unusual godfather for him. And he set out at once.

He had not gone far when he met the devil. The evil spirit offered to be the newborn's godfather. But the peasant said no, and walked ahead.

The next to meet him was a saint, who made the same offer. The peasant liked the holy man, but he did not want for his son a godfather who had no money.

He walked on. Sud-

denly he found himself in a lonely place. There, a strange figure came before him.

It was clad in a white shroud. But the peasant could see that it had bones but no flesh, and in its skull were no eyes. In one hand it held a scythe.

The peasant had no doubt that it was Death. Obviously his end had come. But, to his surprise, Death offered to be his son's godmother.

Because Death would be such a powerful godmother, the peasant agreed. And he told her the day and time of his son's christening.

17.7

"You will not regret it," said the hooded skull.

The peasant returned home. His friends and neighbours were astonished to hear what he told them. All the same, they went to the church for the ceremony.

Punctually, Death came there, all bones and in a white shroud. Everybody looked on in silence.

When it was all over, Death gave the peasant a bag of gold. "When my godson is twenty," she said, "I shall come again and give him my gift."

Years rolled by. The peasant's son grew into a healthy and handsome youth. Before long it was his twentieth birthday.

True to her word,
Death came there
shrouded as before. She
was glad to see her godson and told him that she
had got a gift for him.

As she desired, the godson took her to another room. At her bidding he sat down be side her.

From under her shroud Death took out a leafy twig. "This is a magic herb," she said. "It will make you the most famous physician in the land."

And she explained how it was to be used. When he visited a patient, the godson should look at the bedhead. If he found her standing on the right side, he should give the sick person a potion made from the herb. It would cure any sickness.

But if he found her standing at the left, he should give no treatment. The person was fated to die.

Should the godson ignore the warning, he would come to grief. One thing more. None but he would see Death standing near the bed. As for the herb, it would not dwindle with use.

She touched her godson on the shoulder with a hand and went out as quietly as she had come in.

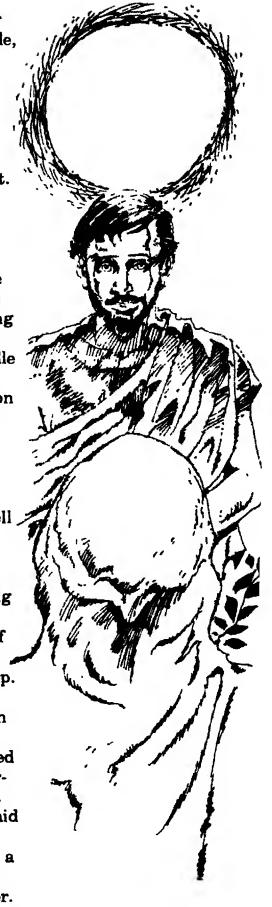
Within months the young man became a well known physician. He cured some hopeless cases. This earned him the reputation of working miracles with his herb.

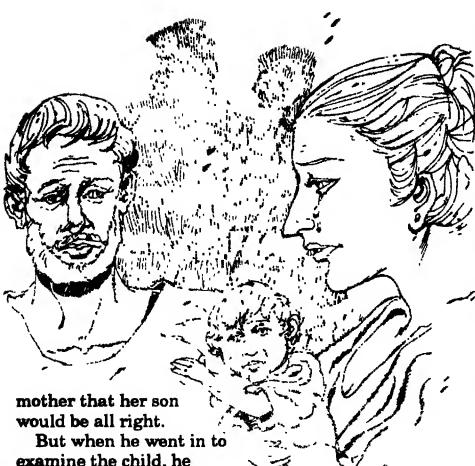
It was also said that if he refused to take up a case, none else could help.

With fame also came riches. The peasant's son lived like a gentleman.

One day a couple called him in. Their three-yearold son was seriously ill. "Please save my son," said the mother tearfully.

The young doctor had a soft spot for children.
Tears moved him further.
He assured the weeping





But when he went in to examine the child, he almost froze. Standing at the left was Death. Silently he pleaded with his godmother to spare the child. But a cold, pitiless stare was all he got.

Nevertheless, he gave the boy his magic potion. He comforted the mother and returned home.

The house was chill, so chill that he shivered. As he guessed, waiting for him was his godmother in her unmistakable shroud.

She scolded him for disobeying her. The godson said that he could not ignore the mother's tears, and he begged to be excused.

Death said that she

had no heart or feelings. Yet something within made her forgive the erring godson. But he must know that this would not be done a second time.

Time passed. One day the physician was summoned to the palace. The king was on his deathbed. The courtiers urged the doctor to save him, or the country would be doomed.

For the king had no son, and his daughter was unmarried. The only successor was the king's nephew, whom nobody liked. As the physician was led to the king, the princess, with weeping eyes, asked him to save her father or she would have to marry her wicked cousin.

But Death stood at the king's left. The doctor could not do anything. He turned his head and saw the princess. Full of tears, her eyes pleaded with him to do something.

The physician gave the king his magic potion.

As he turned homeward, he knew whom to expect there. And this time his godmother was angrier than before.

The young man said that he had no selfish motive. Whatever he had done was for the country and the gentle princess. Since he had done what he was told not to, he was ready for the punishment.

There was a moment's silence. Death seemed to be relenting. "As you did not do it for yourself," she said, "I forgive you. But remember that there will be no third pardon."

The king recovered. He made the young man his court physician. It was a great honour for any doctor. But what he really liked was the love the princess had for him and he for her.

The courtiers felt that in time the king would let

the princess marry the peasant's son.

One early morning the doctor received a call from the palace. The princess was ill — very ill.

The young man rushed to her. Seeing him, the princess weak and pale, smiled. "Now that you are here," she said, "I am in safe hands."

But, to the physician's horror, Death was standing at her left. She even raised a finger by way of warning to her godson.

Yet he gave the princess a herbal dose. He stayed on in the palace all day.

In the evening, when he made for home, he expected to see his godmother in a rage. But he found her quiet. If he was not mistaken, there were tears in the eyeless sockets in her hooded skull

The godmother said she could not save him now. But he must go with her to see what no other man had seen.

He followed her as in a dream. They reached a valley where no tree, no flower, not even grass grew. All he saw were bare white stones.

Then Death took him into a cave. Countless candles, of all sizes, burnt there.

Death told her godson that each of those candles represented a human life. The tall candles stood for the young, those of middle size for the not so young, and the short ones for the old.

"Why is this candle

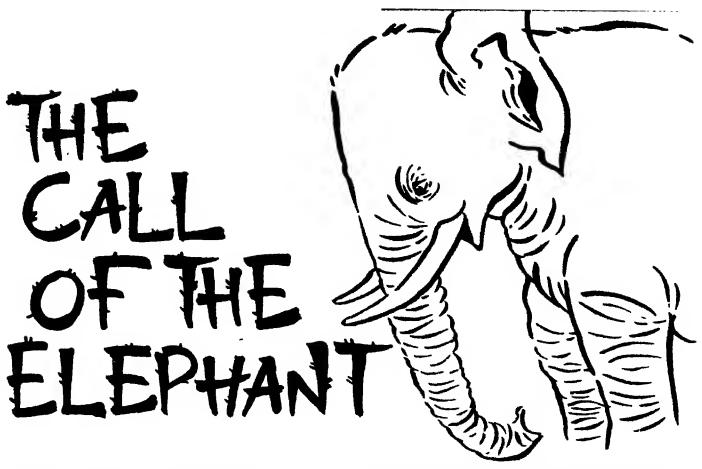


flickering?" asked the

"She is the princess you love," Death replied. "She will soon part with you. But I have the power to unite you. I shall extinguish your flame as well."

Just then two flickering

godson.



Story: Urmila Chakraborty

Illustrations: Chaitali Chatterjee

AVI was in the class—physically present, but in reality, miles away. The Science teacher was talking about sanctuaries and conservation. Her voice came like a distant drone to Ravi. He just did not and could not understand this craze for wildlife and conservation. But his parents were really "into it"—members of the World Wild Life Fund, organisers of seminars on conservation, participants at afforestation campaigns—Oh! the list was unending. At home nobody stopped talking about animals and now

they had started the same in school too. Well Ravi just was not interested, he was having a wonderful time watching a tussle between a red kite and a green kite—dip, sway, rise, fall. Suddenly he felt a sharp dig in the ribs - psst - teacher is talking to you.

The teacher was saying "Ravi do you think your mother would come and talk to us about conservation?"

Somehow he mumbled an appropriate answer and sat down. Boy! Would she come! She'd be thrilled! If she was allowed to decide she would scrap—Hindi, English,
Maths—the entire lot and
schools would only teach
Life Sciences and
Conservation.

Ravi had visited innumerable sanctuaries with his parents—Periyar, Dudhwa, Corbett, Jaldapara, Manas, Sariska. But to his utter amazement his parents still managed to locate forests which they had not seen. Every holidaywinter, spring, summer or autumn they visited forests. Ravi was sick to the teeth of spending days in log cabins or machans, riding on elephants through tall

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grass, getting scratched by thorns and bitten by insects.

But worst of all was his parents excitement at seeing a *cheetal*, spying a *nilgai* or viewing a river turtle.

Why! Oh! Why couldn't they just go to the zoo? Wasn't that much easier and far more comfortable? How upset his parents were when he remained quite unmoved by the 'fascinating flora and fauna'. But Ravijust hated going to the forests and staying there for days on end without TV, video, tandoori chicken and ice-cream! Would you believe it, when they went to Corbett National Park instead of staying at Dhikala where all the facilities were available including TV and yummy food, they opted for the dilapidated forest rest house at Byrani That god-forsaken place had neither water nor electricity. His parents even refused to have the generator facility, not because it cost a pretty penny but because his mother felt. "Ravi. for once let's enjoy the moonlight." Well their day was made because at dusk they saw a family of wild boars. What a bore!

Now they were going to Motichur. His mother had driven up to Dehradun and got a permit from the Director of the Forest Department, to stay in the forest bungalow for a week. Her excitement knew no bounds. Ravi was surprised too-he'd driven on the Haridwar -Hrishikesh Road umpteen number of times but he had never even noticed the small red and green board of the Forest Department which read Motichur Sanctuary. The gate opened and the car swung in. Ravi went back to his exciting adventure story. His father now drove at 15 kmph. Sud

denly they entered a clearing and drew up in front of a forest bungalow. Even Ravi had to admit that the bungalow was picturesque. His parents were thrilled, they said that the forest looked fascinating, the terrain was exciting and there was something special in the breeze, may be a special scent or a sound. To Ravi it was just a forest like any other!

Ravi's parents decided to go on a trek immediately with the forest guard. They were absolutely fearless. Well that's not really true. Actually it never even struck them that one should or could be



frightened of wild animals. Their love for the animals was just fantastic. As usual, Ravi preferred to stay back at the Forest Ranger's Office. In his experience, all forest rangers invariably told "exciting stories about the forest". But for once, the ranger sat quietly and read a magazine. Goody! The fellow had a TV set too and believe it or not a film was on. Ravi was soon immersed in the movie.

Suddenly the air was rent by a most terrible sound-whether it was scream, a moan or a groan-Ravi didn't know, it was like nothing that he'd ever heard before. The Ranger picked up his gun and rushed out shouting, "Hathi! Ghayal hathi!" All the other workers rushed out behind him. The noise the terrifying groan, must have been heard all over the forest because the guijars (tribal herdsmen), who lived in the forest were soon to be seen rushing out from here and there. Ravi followed them. He was compelled by some unknown force. He felt that he simply had to know what could make an animal produce such a



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sound. There was such agony in that unknown sound.

The wounded animal had rushed around the forest in agony and had produced a few more groans but now there was a peculiar lull, a chilling silence all over the forest. But the wounded elephant's path could easily be picked out as it was marked by flattened grass, trampled shrubs and broken branches. Some blood stains were also visible on the ground and on tree trunks. Wherever the ground was wet and soft the elephant's footprints were clearly visible. After studying the prints the Ranger said that the animal's left hind foot was badly injured and he pointed out the drag marks on the ground. After about an hour's tracking the forest seemed to become denser and the Ranger suddenly caught sight of the injured animal. Ravi had a clear view-it was a magnificent tusker but his left tusk was broken and the animal was writhing in agony. His breath came in huge gulps and he was twisting, turning and rolling in pain. There was a deep wound on his left foot.

masses of mangled flesh oozed out with blood dripping. Even to Ravi's inexperienced eyes it was clearly a bullet wound. Everybody stood in silence and watched the animal. The tusker turned and there was a similar wound on his right shoulder. Flies were buzzing around and the poor elephant was trying to plaster the wounds with mud and grass. It was clear to everyone that the elephant would die. If it somehow survived. it would be maimed and incapacitated for life!

Ravi wondered who could have done such a ghastly thing and why anyone should be so cruel. He wondered whether the killer would be caught and punished? The elephant had probably foraged into a nearby field and the villagers shot him. How unthinkingly man uses the deadly gun on mute animais. He probably does not even stop to consider the consequences of his action. Suddenly, in a flash. Ravi realised that the animals are truly wonderful and they must be saved. Man had to stop this unthinking and uncaring plunder.

"The Super Six and The Cavern of The Doom"

Review by T. S. Sudhir

HE scene at the Shri Ram Centre in Mandi House in New Delhi on August 13 reminded me of the kind of children's parties a family in our neighbourhood used to organise when we were in Bombay. How, 20-25 odd children dressed in all kinds of weird costumes

used to create havoc in the cramped space of a two-room-kitchen flat.

Shri Ram Centre, however, could accommodate all the laughter, hoopla and excitement of the kids who had assembled in very large numbers to watch Teamwork's latest production, The Super Six

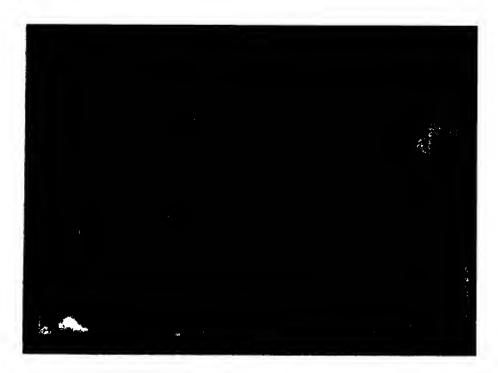
and the Cavern of the Great Doom, a children's musical play on environmental concerns.

It was confusion right from the start. The ladies manning the box office, by mistake, handed me a complimentary ticket for the 14th. Luckily, I managed to scamper back in time to get it changed.



But I didn't miss any action as the play commenced almost 15 minutes after the scheduled time. A boy sitting in the front row insisted on knowing when the 'cloth' (curtain) would be lifted. His query was soon answered as six kids -Didi, Bond, Tidda, Eaty, Einstein, Biceps trooped on stage. Didi introduced her friends to the audience: Bond was 'the beautiful man' while Eaty with his insatiable hunger was the bottomless pit'.

Introductions over, the six friends soon find out that their favourite tree is to be cut down by the



TDA (total development or total devaluation authority whichever way you look at it). The six take a nap and interestingly, travel into the realm of dreams (together!). It is a nightmar-

ish world ruled by the Great Doom and his minions, Malba Rani and Gidh. This unholy trinity has completely destroyed the fragile environment on earth. But lack of unity amongst them gives



hope to the Super Six to drive a wedge and destroy their domain. The process also involves solving a riddle, the answer to which is B-R-O-O-M.

In fact, the audience is very nicely involved in the act of solving the riddle as the Super Six mingle with the former, while the production hands exhorted members of the audience to hold brooms for a while before handing them over to the Six.

The production, though commendable, had chinks in its armour, too. For one, the effort to create laughter was a bit too pronounced — specially with Howard Rosenmeyer, who played

the roles of a TDA official and Gidh. However, the kids in the audience did enjoy this slapstick comedy.

Yet another drawback was in the area of puppets — the scenes with the puppets looked very shoddy, uninteresting, loose and didn't stand out at all.

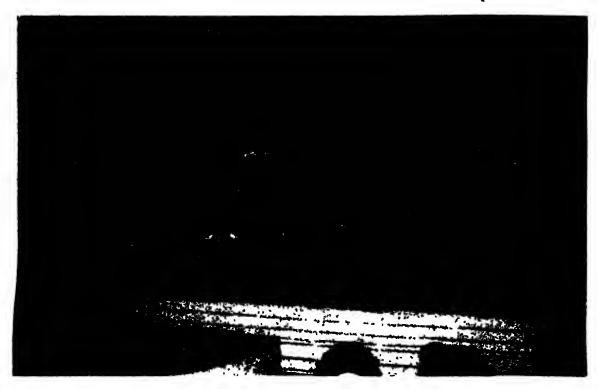
The climax scene with two flashing torches creating a frightening effect was well done, though the production members could hardly hold the cloth properly The lyrics were nice and dialogues witty with good use made of bilingualism. There were far too many symbols in the play and

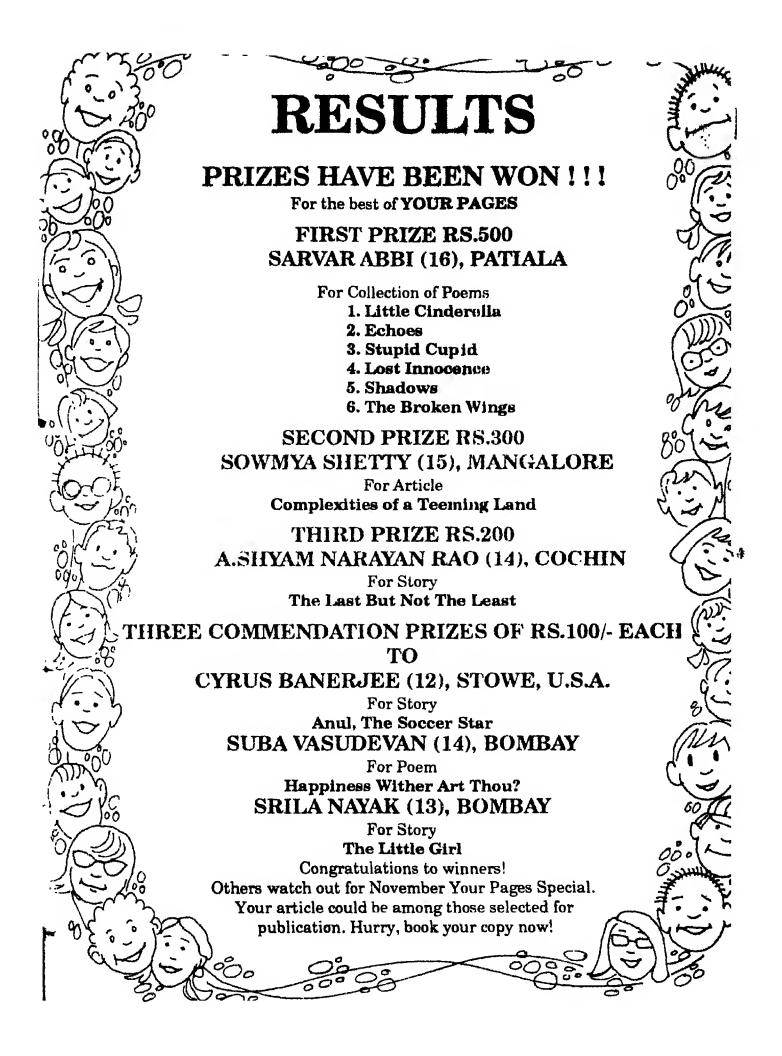
one wondered if the message that 'if we work as a team, we can clear up the environment mess,' went across to the young audience.

The Super Six acted commendably with Eaty (Luis Misra) and Tidda (Pratik Sharda) being the most outstanding of them all.

It was an evening well spent and the enthusiasm of the kids in the audience was infectious. As the kid sitting two seats away from me exclaimed to his mother just when the Super Six were about to fight the Great Doom -- "Now we will see the war."

That, I think, summed it all up.





THE ROTCAGE

Story: Homagni Chaudhuri Illustrations: Gautam Roy

S the signboard of the agency became visible, Kutti was confident that the kidnapper would certainly be caught. He ran to press the bell. His mother, Mrs. Ganguly, read the board. It said in big letters,

AD Detective Agency,

and below that in smaller letters,

'Chief investigator-Inspector(Retd.) Anjana Dutta'.

The agency was only a fortnight old. A month earlier, Ms. Anjana Dutta had retired after fifteen years in the Police Force. She had joined the police to become an ace detective and with hard work and excellent results in the departmental examinations, she became the youngest Inspector in the Service. But over the years, Ms. Anjana realised that apart from attending some training classes on forensic science, she was busy with administrative and VVIP

security duties. When she became eligible for a small pension, she retired to start her own detective agency.

Ms. Anjana's aunt allowed her the use of a room in the ground floor of her house in Jodhpur Park. Ms. Anjana's nephew Pintu whose school was closed for the summer vacation joined the agency as a very eager assistant. From day one the doorbell kept ringing. The signboard, 'AD Detective Agency', was the attraction. But not one of the visitors wanted the services of the agency, rather they wanted to sell their own services. Some demonstrated office aids, others did sample surveys. Pintu did not lose his enthusiasm. He kept on assuring his aunt, "Mashi, one case, just one case and we will be famous. We have to wait for the first case."

As the bell pressed by Kutti rang, Ms. Anjana looked up without much hope from the book on forensic medicine that lay open on the table in front of her. Pintu got up from his chair and opened the door. Worried Mrs. Ganguly and hopeful Kutti entered.

Mrs. Ganguly looked at Ms. Anjana and asked, "You are Inspector Dutta?"

"Yes please, retired," replied Ms. Anjana. "Can I help?"

"You must," said the lady. "Raja is missing since yesterday and we are very worried."

Pintu was thrilled.
Maybe Raja was a young scientist who had been kidnapped for the magic formula that he had developed. Mashi would solve the case and make the agency famous.

Further questioning by Ms. Anjana revealed Raja was a dog, one of mixed parentage but with spaniel as the dominant part. He was ten months old and though nearly full grown very playful. He was black in colour. Luckily there was a



snapshot of Raja taken by Kutti and he handed over a copy. Raja had the freedom of the house and was allowed to roam around the neighbourhood but he always returned for meals and spent the night within the house. If he was late, the beating of his dinner bowl with a spoon would fetch Raja at a run. That is, till yesterday. He had not returned for lunch and was missing since.

"Did Raja have any enemies?" asked Ms. Anjana. "Did he bite any one? Was there any complaint from the neighbours?"

"No, no," replied Kutti excitedly. "Just the opposite. Raja was very friendly. As a puppy, he followed me from the street corner and adopted us. He wags his tail at everyone. Maybe Raja is not a suspicious watch dog but we love him."

"What do you suspect then?"

"Raja must have been kidnapped," said Mrs. Ganguly. "Maybe they will try to teach him tricks or sell him. We must find Raja, we don't want him to suffer."

Ms. Anjana reassured mother and son, guaranteeing that all efforts would be made to find Raja.

After the door was closed, Ms. Anjana said, "There is one possibility I did not mention to mother and son. Too many cars

are driven too fast in
Jodhpur Park and we
know Raja wanders
around. It's quite possible
he has been run over. I'll
check this end. We have
to find out the facts.
Pintu, meet your friends
and ask them if they have
seen Raja. Take the
snapshot with you. We
will meet at lunch time."

The office was closed. Ms. Anjana rushed to the site of the large garbage dump by the side of the post office and luckily found the Corporation van there.

She asked, "Was there a dead dog here yesterday or today?"

"Madam, we have no time for idle chitchat," replied one of the loaders.

Ms. Anjana then de-

cided on an indirect approach. She knocked on the door of one of the houses opposite the dump and when it was opened by the lady of the house, said, "Excuse me, but I'm doing a survey on behalf of Care and Concern. Can you please tell me whether there have been dead dogs in the garbage recently?"

"There is enough of a stink here without your foolish questions," was the reply and the door was shut rudely.

Ms. Anjana wanted to persist with her enquiries but remembered her intense irritation with the sample surveys. She knew that she needed a better approach. She would have to think. It was nearly lunch time and she was hungry and no doubt Pintu would also be wanting his tiffin. She bought twelve kachoris and ten rosogollas and returned to the office.

Meanwhile Pintu had met some of his friends. It was a hot day and they were indoors. But instead of information, Pintu met with much ridicule.

"Our Topse will find the missing king," taunted Manik who till then was a good friend.

The reference was to

Feluda's assistant. Feluda being the great detective of Satyajit Ray films. After this when Manik offered him a cold drink, Pintu, even though very thirsty, refused. A tired and hungry Pintu started back for office. Maybe Anjana Mashi had solved the case, she was very clever.

Back in the office, aunt and nephew reported zero progress to each other.

Ms. Anjana concluded, "We need fresh energy and inspiration. Let us eat."

Ms. Anjana felt the need to excercise the little grey cells in the style of



the great detective
Hercule Poirot. After
disposing of a few
kachoris she swallowed
four rosogollas in rapid
succession for instant
energy. The grey cells
were activated and Ms.
Anjana sat staring grimly
into space. Pintu was
impressed, the problem
was being solved.

After ten minutes, Ms. Anjana smiled and announced, "Evidence, where is the evidence? We need to do work, like Sherlock Holmes. Pintu. you have covered the south side of the colony, your friends are there. Now you must make friends in the area behind the market, near Govindapur. Try to join the cricket game in the park. I'll cover the area by the side of Lake Gardens."

Pintu with four rosogollas inside was energetic but things were difficult.

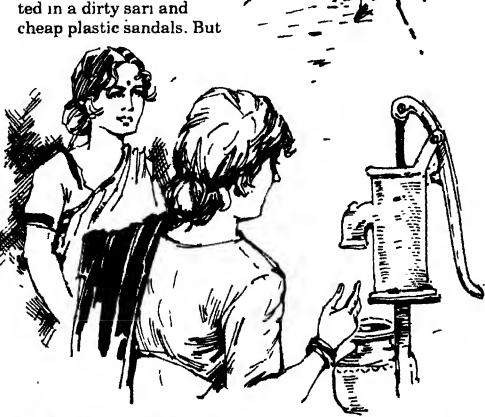
A small but rude creature shouted at him, "No, you can't join us, our boys have to wait for turns.
Get lost."

Pintu, though much insulted, did not get lost. He hung around at a distance just in case he heard something but it was useless.

After an hour, Pintu started back for the office

by a roundabout road. He was angry and he kicked at the loose stones that he found on the way. But as he came near a tubewell, the sight of his Mashi made him stop in his tracks. His anger turned to amazement. He remembered his mother saying, "Anjana was the name of Lord Hanuman's mother and your Mashi was quite a monkey, the way she could climb trees."

Mashi carrying a brass pitcher was standing in the queue in front of the tubewell and was excitedly chatting with a group of maid servants around the hand pump. Her hair was tied in a top knot and she was outfitted in a dirty sari and cheap plastic sandals. But



what really shook Pintu was the pair of earrings made of red plastic beads that dangled and danced. Pintu knew that Mashi insisted on the plain look. As Pintu stared, Mashi glared at him and Pintu knew that he was to go away, Mashi was in disguise.

Back in the office, Pintu looked forward to eating the remaining two rosogollas but they were not there, Mashi must have finished them. And yet she is so slim, thought Pintu, quite unlike Nero Wolfe, the fat armchair bound detective. Pintu picked up a magazine and dozed off.

Ms. Anjana's return

woke him up. Mashi appeared to be very pleased. "Bhagavati gave me some interesting news," she beamed.

Pintu did not ask who Bhagavati was, must be one or other of the group of gossiping maids.

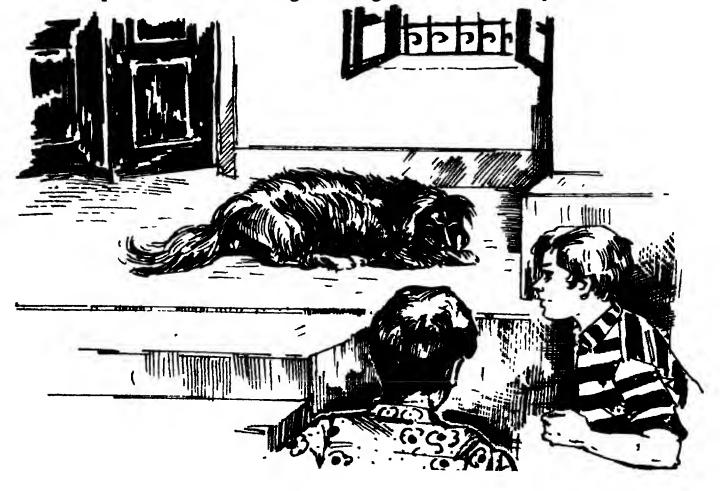
"Potla who lives in Lake Gardens just by the side of our colony has got a new black dog," Mashi continued. "Your friend Bunty lives around there. Go and find out."

Bunty was pleased to see his friend. He and Pintu were in the same class. Bunty risked his elder sister's anger and pulled out a large bottle of cola that she kept in the fridge for her guests. When Pintu asked about Potla, Bunty replied, "Yes, I know the house. A dog like the one in your snap comes there sometimes. Is it black in colour?"

On Pintu's confirmation, he added, "I think it is there now. Let's go overand check."

Bunty and Pintu walked over to the gate of Potla's house. Through the railings, they saw a black spaniel lying on the veranda. It looked exactly like the one in the snapshot. On an impulse, Pintu called out, "Raja, Raja."

The dog stood up and began to walk towards the boys.





At that moment, a big girl came out of the house and shouted, "Bunty, why are you teasing my dog?"

"Miradi, my friend Pintu says that this dog belongs to the Ganguly family," replied Bunty.

"Nonsense."

Pintu took out the snapshot and tried to show it but Miradi said, "Kalu has been with us for months. In any case this is a hazy photo. Now get lost before I cuff your ears, you pair of monkeys."

Pintu, confused, returned to the office.

Mashi decided that Mrs.

Ganguly should check for herself. Pintu and Kutti were to remain behind, it

was best not to provoke Mira who seemed to have a dreadful temper.

Soon Mrs. Ganguly and Ms. Anjana were in Potla's house in Lake Gardens. They found that the dog answered to both the names of Raja and Kalu. For months he had been eating in both the houses. But two days ago, Potla had fallen ill and since he insisted on Kalu's presence, Raja had not returned. Ms. Anjana suspected that Potla's elder sister Mira had something to do with that.

Mrs. Ganguly decided, "Raja is comfortable here. Let him remain till Potla becomes well.

After that he can go where he likes, we'll share him. I'll explain to Kutti."

As far as
Inspector(Retd.) Anjana
Dutta and Pintu were
concerned, the results
could not have been
happier. When Mrs.
Ganguly came to pay the
agency's fee, Kutti also
came along with a cake
for Pintu. Kutti was
proud that Raja was
helping Potla to get over
his sickness.

As he was leaving, he told Pintu, "Potla's father will come to consult Mashi. There have been thefts in his factory and he feels that this is an inside job."

Story: Kamala Rajan Illustrations: Deepak Harichandan

MOWTO PREGNISS

JOR JOR

T is difficult being a student these days. Elders. homework, tuitions, TV attractions—all pressurise students. We look at our parents in wonder when they tell us of their carefree childhood days. Those were memorable and fun, they tell us, except for a certain strict teacher who used the cane relentlessly sometimes. They tell us of the hours spent in climbing trees, playing games or being cuddled with cousins under a single blanket on a cold winter night listening to a fond Uncle narrate a ghoststory.

Sadly enough today's student finds no time for these luxuries. Keeping pace with the extensive

syllabus, completing loads of homework or watching some interesting show on TV absorbs all his time. leaving no space for leisure activities like embroidery, knitting, craft-making, gardening, carpentry or even reading fiction. This does not mean a student for lack of hobbies defends himself as being a victim of circumstances. If you watch yourself carefully you will find that the teeming mandatory activities are not properly timed or you are an easy prey to the charms of the idiot box we watch more

out of habit than interest.

Keep a notebook
This is your guide to a
well-planned day. In it
you must list your priorities. Necessities, ambition



and leisure time activity. A passing brainwave or any interesting idea maybe recorded in it for future reference. Also make a flowchart of your present way of working, finding out where you are losing time or are disorganised. Starting with a notebook remember that a man who moves mountains begins with small pieces.



A timetable

We hear of timetables for studies. To tabulate a day helps one to have a regimen and not lose precious time. For example, if you are an early riser you can do all your homework in the morning. If you are an on-thetime riser then with a little effort you can rise an hour earlier to cycle to your nearest club to play competitive tennis, badminton, karate or any of your favourite games. Physical activity is important for one and this must be included somewhere in your day's regimen. Or you may even mark an hour in the evening to play with your neighbours. Stick to the timetable. The time you allot to each activity must not take longer than you've stipulated, keeping in mind that one activity does not override another. Concentrate in class

This saves you learning time back home. By understanding what the teacher is saying, asking for explanations where you have doubts will make you understand the subject better. A light reading in the evening leaves the lesson imprinted on our mind. This obviates the need for 'mugging' or learning by rote which consumes time

we can otherwise channel into fruitful activity.

Choose TV programmes carefully

Allot an hour everyday for a TV programme. You must choose the programme you consider best for the day. By this you don't deny yourself the pleasure of 'taking your mind off things.' Rather you gain time for your favourite activity or maybe do something



constructive about a career ambition. Too many TV programmes is passive activity where the brain does not do any thinking independently. For example, it is not necessary to watch every football match just because you are its devotee. Instead you must go out and kick a football, experiencing the thrills of the game first-hand.

Weekend premiums

These two days are like the balancing scales in vour timetable. Letterwriting, visiting the library, lending a helping hand around the house. tidving up your books, your personal belongings and a host of pending jobs must be completed. The trick in making the most of them is to once again allot a longer time in giving yourself the luxury of the activity you enjoy doing most.

Relaxing and bedtime

Never go to bed with textbooks. You will yawn more over them than study! It is soothing to snuggle down with a novel or magazine. Reading everyday for fifteen minutes acts as a rejuvenator, ironing out the days stresses and strains—clearing one's mind.

To use the phrase "No Time!" as an excuse or explanation for a performance is a confession of a disorganised lifestyle. To realise our ambitions and execute our duties is but necessary to put our priorities in order, defining our life, channelising our faculties, controlling our day, organising the handmaid of Time at our disposal.

Make a start right away!



Story: Saibal Chakraborty Illustrations: Deepak Harichandan

ABU suddenly lost his new umbrella in school. He had got it after a year's waiting. Mother had been prodding father to get an umbrella for him for over a year. The little boy had to walk a mile to school every day. If it rained poor Babu got drenched. Last month he had been down with fever and could not attend school for three days. The family had only one umbrella which Madhab Roy, Babu's father took alongwith him to his office.

This year before monsoon had set in Madhab babu got a new umbrella for Babu from Nimta Bazaar.

"Keep it with care!" he warned his ten-year-old son, "this has cost me a hundred rupees. Umbrellas are things which

people forget to collect after they visit a place. You must be very careful. Whenever you leave a place make sure that you haven't left behind the umbrella."

Babu was so happy to have the umbrella that he could hardly follow what his father was telling him about being careful with it, while using it. It was a nice, little thing he thought. Great fun indeed to open, just by pressing a button. It opened with a ierk and the shade above the head fanned out. The cloth was silky and the handle made of pure steel. Babu could hardly believe that he was the owner of this cute, little thing. A good thing to be shown off to his friends in school, he thought.

Babu first thought of Debu among his friends.

Debu had been admitted to the school only this season. No sooner had he joined class than he became Babu's best friend. They sat on the same bench, shared their tiffin and walked home together. At Bakultala crossing they separated. Babu took the road to Ghola and Debu went in the opposite direction with the promise to meet the next day.

Debu was now leaving the school. The day Babu heard the news he burst into tears on returning home. It was in the tiffinhour that Debu gave him the news of his father's promotion and posting to the district town. This had upset Babu. He did not have many friends. Debu was the only person he lent his cricket-bat or exchanged stamps with

and shared all his secrets with.

Now Debu would go to a bigger school. The bluecoloured school bus would take him everyday to school and back home.

Babu gave the news to his mother amidst tears. It was drizzling then. The two friends had walked for the last time under Babu's new umbrella. At Bakultala before saying, 'Bye' to Babu, Debu smiled and said, "Today is our last walk together under your new umbrella, Babu. I will remember it. Father has promised to buy me a raincoat after I

join the new school. But umbrellas and raincoats are not the same thing. Two persons cannot share a raincoat as they can very easily an umbrella." Debu was smiling as he said this. But now as Babu remembered them, he felt a pang in his heart.

Then came June and it rained almost everyday. And on one of those days, Babu lost his umbrella. There was no rain in the afternoon when he left school and forgot to take it along. When father learnt about it he was very upset.

"You must have been very careless about it." he

grumbled. Tomorrow make it a point to ask the darwans of the school." He also wrote a letter to the Headmaster of the school reporting the loss and sought his help. But next day even after a thorough search the umbrella could not be traced. The only ray of hope was that one of the darwans, Shewpujan, had left for his home in Bihar. the same afternoon on receipt of a telegram. His room was locked. It was quite possible that he had found the umbrella and locked it in his room. He would return only after a week.

Madhab babu was glum when he heard the news. Babu was also very upset. The loss of the umbrella coming close on Debu's departure made him very morose. He seldom read any story books now or went out to play with other boys. Madhab babu kept grumbling all the time about Babu's carelessness. It was the end of June and it rained almost everyday. Babu went to school without any umbrella and most days he got drenched.

One such afternoon as mother was wiping his head with a towel, suddenly Babu exclaimed.

"See Mama, no sooner



Debu had left the school I lost the umbrella. I am sure I will get it back as soon as he returns. It's just possible that his father is transferrex here before long?"

Madhab babu had just returned from work then. Hanging his old umbrella on the nail on the wall he remarked, "You lost the umbrella because of your carelessness. What relation is there between Debu's going or coming back? And you didn't seriously search for it also."

Just then mother interrupted, "Babu, I think tomorrow Shewpujan is due to return from leave, isn't he? You must not forget to ask him if he has kept the umbrella in his room. After all these days you may get back the lost umbrella." She tried to cheer Babu up with a smile.

Babu just nodded while father went to his room, still grumbling. Babu looked outside. It was raining more heavily than before. Whenever it rained he was reminded of Debu. He remembered the days he had played and talked with him. Those were such good times that he wished they would come back once again like the monsoon did, each year.

Next afternoon Madhab babu was returning home a little earlier than usual. It was drizzling. At Bakultala he found Babu on the other side of the street. He was in the company of a new boy. Not the boy but the umbrella was what immediately caught Madhab babu's attention. Both boys were holding aloft a new umbrella, exactly like the one Babu had lost.

Madhab babu hurriedly crossed the street, came to the boys and asked Babu impatiently, "So Babu, you have got back your umbrella? Shewpujan must have kept it safe?"

Babu looked at his father and replied, "No Baba, Shew said he didn't see any umbrella. This one belongs to Kanchan," he pointed to his companion. "He has joined our school only yesterday. We share the same desk.You know Baba," his face lit up as he continued, "Kanchan has said that he would walk me home everyday if it rained. And if it didn't then I walk with him upto his house at Kadamtala. That would be great fun, won't it Baba?"

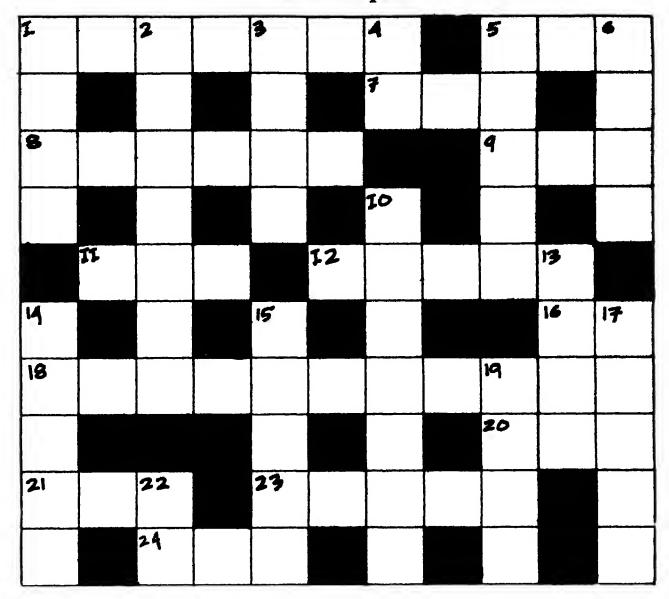
Madhab babu put his hand on Kanchan's shoulder and replied with a smile, "It would certainly be my dear."

He felt sorry that the umbrella had not been recovered. But he felt happy to see Babu cheerful after so many days. He was almost sure that Babu's new friend looked exactly like Debu—the friend who had gone away and made Babu lonely and unhappy.



CROSS QUIZ

Lalita Deepak



CLUES

Across

- 1. Buddha was born in these gardens (7)
 - 5 This flying mammal is blind (3)
- 7. Conserous trees with needles (3)
- 8. Poet of Paradise Lost or On His Blindness (6)
- 9. Mohammed . he moved like a butterfly and stung like a bee (3)
- 11. Acronym for Irish Republic Army (3)
 - 12. She-goat (5)
 - 16. Abbreviate Uttar Pradesh (2)
 - 18. Durable or clothes strong

- enough to be worn again and again (4,3,4)
- 20. . emia, fill in the blanks to indicate 'lack of blood' (3)
 - 21. Spoil, impair (3)
 - 23. Impels, entreats earnestly (5)
 - 24 Be ill (3)

DOWN

- 1 Alladın's magic....(4)
- 2 The disease the anopheles mosquito causes (7)
- 3. . .man of India; Sardar Patel (4)
- 4. Whenever, whether, conditional (2)

- 5 The grey cells are found here (5)
- 6 Two are a due; threstonic are a. (4)
- 10 Strap of material for binding up a wound (7)
 - 13 Chinese currency (4)
- 14 Marsh, wet spongy ground (5)
 - 15. Capital of Afghanistan (5)
 - 17 Frolic; practical john (5)
- 19 What does 'e' in news stand for (4)
 - 22. Egyptian God of the Sun (2)

THE BLIND WITNESS

Illustrations: Deepak Harichandan

The Blind Witness by Arup Kumar Dutta is a CBT publication. This book won the second prize in a competition for writers of Children's Book organised by CBT in 1981

Footsteps On The Stairs

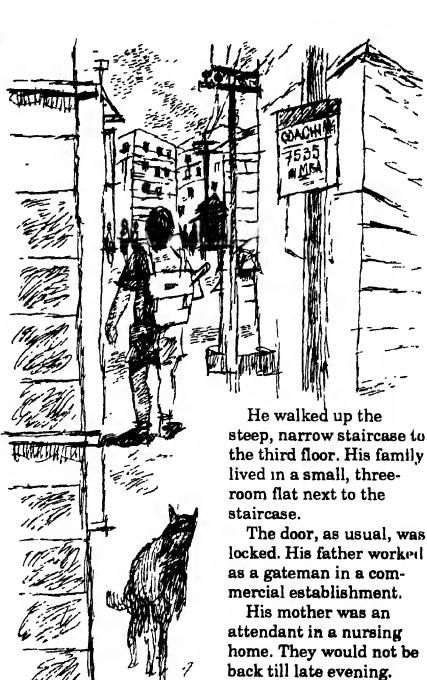
WO boys hopped off the crowded bus. Sunil guided Ramu to the entrance of the ugly, five-storeyed building.

"See you tomorrow," he said, patting Ramu on the back. Then, dodging the steady stream of pedestrians on the sidewalk, Sunil went his way.

Ramu shrugged his shoulders to straighten the school-bag strapped to his back. He tucked his cane under his arm. There was no need to use it, for this was familiar territory.

The L-shaped building. with its stained walls and grimy exterior, had been a part of his life ever since he could remember. It was in one of the most congested parts of the sprawling metropolis, in what had once been a slum.

Though Ramu had lived in the building all his young life, he had never seen it, for he was born blind.



mercial establishment. His mother was an attendant in a nursing

home. They would not be back till late evening.

Ramu fished out a key from his pocket and unlocked the door. He deposited his cane and

CHILDREN'S WORLD OCTOBER 1993

school bag on his study table, washed himself in the bathroom and entered the narrow kitchen.

In their house every object was always in its place. His parents took care to ensure that nothing was ever out of place. So Ramu knew exactly where his food, prepared by his mother before she left for work, was kept.

He ate quickly, washed the utensils before replacing them in the cabinet and returned to the front room.

He sat at the study table and allowed his body to relax. This was the time of the day he enjoyed most. The thick walls shut out the street noises. The other people who lived in the building were either away at work or enjoying their afternoon nap. It was quiet and peaceful.

He shut out everything from his brain and concentrated on the tiny sounds that filtered through the prevailing silence.

This was a game he played with himself.
Because he was blind his other senses were highly developed. He could pick up sounds that people with normal eyesight could not. He had also



learnt to decipher sounds, to make a correct guess of the origin of any particular noise, to associate ideas with sounds and, thereby, get a full picture of what was happening.

With the help of his parents and friends like Sunil he had for long practised how to identify a person by his voice and even by the sound of his footsteps. By listening to footsteps he could guess whether a person was lightly or heavily built, even whether he was tall or short. Nature had made him blind, but had compensated by giving him a keen memory.

Some people remember faces. Ramu remembered sounds. Once he linked a person to his footsteps or his voice he never forgot him.

Even when alone he disciplined himself to listen to sounds. Now. because he was safe in him room, he did so for pleasure. But, elsewhere, it was a necessity. On the street or at school, even when someone was around to guide him, he depended on sounds to show him the way. Voices or sounds bouncing off walls gave him an idea of his surroundings. The tap-tapping of his cane

indicated whether he was on a concrete floor, the macadam surface of a road or a side-walk.

He concentrated, stretching his hearing powers to the utmost. One by one the sounds penetrated his consciousness. The buzzing of a fly. No, the buzz was too deep and resonant for a fly. Must be a blue bottle. The steady plop, plop, plop, plop of a dripping tap. A peculiar nasal, rasping sound.

At first Ramu couldn't place it. Then he knew and smiled to himself. The snores of Mrs. Anand next door, a large, fat, garrulous woman with an appetite as hearty as her guffaw.

Then, abruptly, Ramu heard footsteps on the staircase.

Three pairs of feet were coming up, slow, casual gaits. One pair Ramu was familiar with. They belonged to Mr. Gopalan, a tenant who lived on the next floor.

Ramu was hearing the other two for the first time. He strained his ears to distinguish between the overlapping footsteps. Both were male footsteps. One of the men's tread was heavy, the space between one step and



another unusually long. A tall man, Ramu decided, and heavy. The steps were firm and springy though, suggesting a muscular body.

The second man stepped lightly, quick, hurrying footsteps. A short man. Thin too and light of feet, for his steps were hardly audible.

The three were discussing business. Ramu could hear them clearly, though he could not understand what they were talking about.

There was something about their voices that aroused Ramu's curiosity. He could read voices as others could read gestures or facial expressions. Mr. Gopalan's Ramu knew. A soft spoken man he was. The thin, short man was wheezing a bit as if not used to climbing flights of stairs. His voice was a whine, the voice of a puppy used to being kicked. But Ramu's sharp mind could detect a note of cunning in the voice. A smooth character, he decided at once.

The big man's voice was crude, unrefined.
There was a streak of cruelty in that voice and Ramu admitted to himself that he would not like to meet him in a lonely

alley.

What was Mr. Gopalan doing in such company!

The trio stepped onto the third-floor landing and then continued up the stairs to the next floor. Ramu heard a snatch of conversation before they passed out of earshot.

"No advance, Mr. Gopalan was saying, "you know how I do business, Boka."

"Come, Gopalan, for once," said the big man, whose name obviously was Boka. "We've got something really big going. Ranga here'll confirm that."

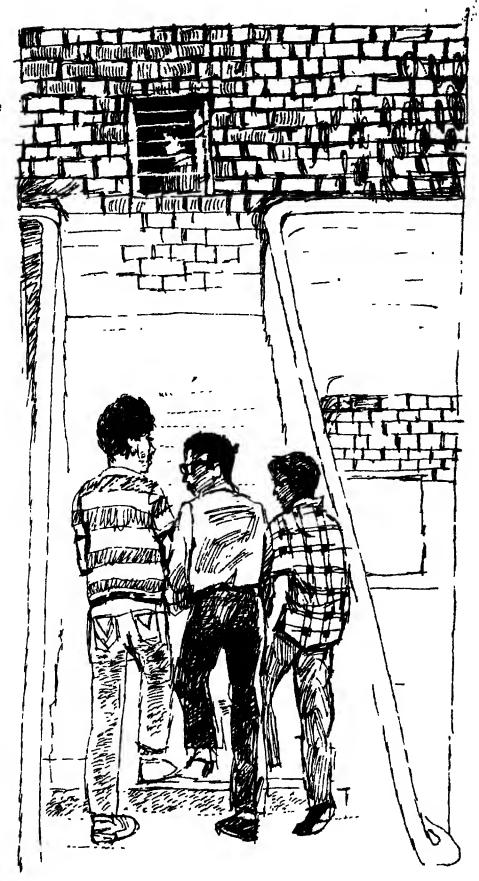
"Right," said the thin man. "It's too big for the kind of resources we have......"

The voices faded away. Ramu shrugged disinterestedly. What Mr. Gopalan did or who he associated with was none of his business.

But, moments later, a sharp, cracking sound made Ramu sit up with a jerk, alert and erect.

It was unlike any sound he had ever heard. It resembled the backfire of an automobile, but had not emerged from the street. It had come from somewhere above and Ramu frowned.

Seconds later there was



a sudden rush down the staircase. Whoever was hurrying down was doing so at breakneck speed.

The rushing footsteps hit Ramu's ears for a few seconds only. But that was more than enough.

Two people were running downstairs. Ramu recognised them with a shock of surprise. Boka and Ranga, the two who just walked up with Mr. Gopalan.

Ramu ran to the door and pricked up his ears. He heard a sudden roaring sound as a powerful motorcycle sprang to life. The roar grew fainter as the motorcycle disappeared through the crowded street.

Ramu was both confused and bewildered.
Had something happened to Mr. Gopalan? Should he go upstairs to find out?
But then, blind as he was, what could he discover alone?

He had just about decided to go and wake up Mrs. Anand when a piercing scream rang through the entire building.

"Help, help!" A female voice was shricking hysterically, "Murder, murder! Police, police!"

A babble of shouts and counter shouts arose in

response. There was a scurrying of feet as residents of the building ran in the direction of the shrieks.

Ramu moved swiftly out of his room and climbed the stairs as fast as he dared.

The fourth floor verandah was crowded with people, mostly women and children since the menfolk were away at work. Ramu stopped in his tracks. It was no longer possible to move without bumping into others.

The murmur of voices revealed to him what he had dreaded all the time. Mr. Gopalan was dead. He had been shot through the back of his head.

To be continued





ESPITE educational research on how children learn, many adults still find it difficult to accept that children can learn through play. If they're having fun, surely that can't be educational? Perhaps if play was referred to as "active learning" this conflict would not arise.

Certainly, "active learning" is what is encouraged at Launch Pad, at the Science Museum in London which was Britain's first interactive gallery. The hands-on approach has proved not only very popular, but also instructive, for chil-

dren and adults alike.
Active learning does not assume that children will learn all they need to know through experience.
Adult explainers are on hand to ask children questions, prompt and encourage them.

Learning may take place at different levels but, for a young child, the opportunity to interact with an exhibit is invaluable. It is likely that the child will gain experience, possibly a mental image, of a concept which will then relate to formal teaching of the scientific principle at a later stage.

It is important that the interactive exhibits are

powerful motivators and that they are fun. They generate an enthusiasm for science and technology which text books are unable to rival and they often act as a source of inspiration for further scientific work at home or school. The recent introduction of paper making and structures' demonstrations at Launch Pad has opened up a new range of possibilities for parents and children ... making use of items as basic as old newpapers at home.

New research, carried out by the children's Learning in Science Research Group at the University of Leeds, in northern England, and the SPACE project at King's college, London, have shown the informal notions about science that young children develop from their experiences of the everyday world are very strongly held. Indeed, it appears that these theories persist into adult life and very often dominate where they clash with formal science

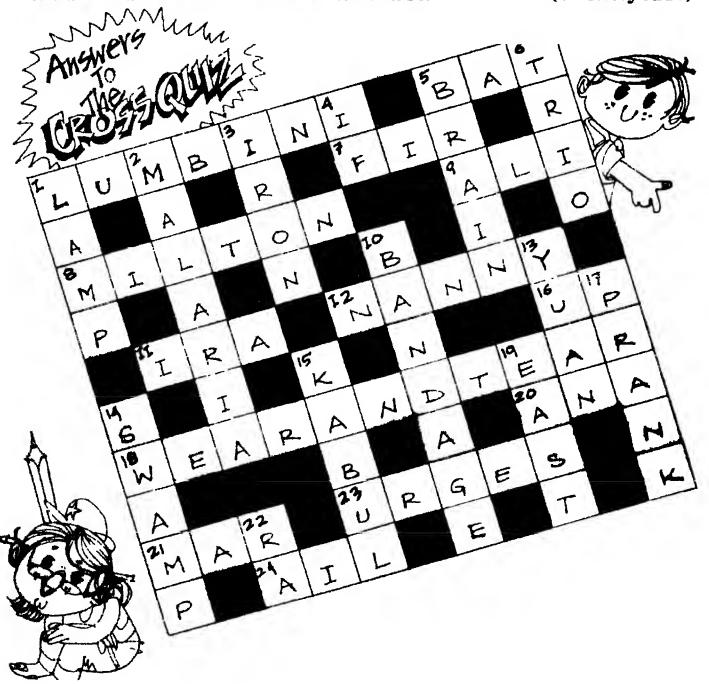
teaching. For instance, many adults think it is hotter in the summer in the northern hemisphere because we are nearer the sun, or that heavier things will often fall faster, both of which are scientifically false.

Because these ideas are how children make sense of the world, science teachers need to understand and address the common misconceptions
in science before they can
hope to impart formal
scientific ideas. This also
has implications for
formal education in
science centres and museums; and exploring the
common misconceptions
in science forms an important part of "Explainer"
training and in the designing and planning of
new exhibitions at Sci-

ence Museum.

For science educators, the important lesson is that nearly all children do have intuitive ideas about how the world works. Failing to challenge their commonsenge reasoning may run the risk that it is these theories, rather than scientific ones, that will stray with them into adulthood.

(Courtesy: BIS)



FACT FILE

Birds have the highest body temperature of all warm blooded animals.

*

A swan has the maximum number of feathers compared to other birds.

A Japanese phoenix fowl has the longest feathers.

 \star

About 90 per cent of a mammal's energy is spent in maintaining the body temperature.

+

A nine-banded armadullo usually has a litter of four identical babies, who are also always of the same sex.

 \star

Shrews and duck-billed platypuses are the only poisonous mammals.

4

A blue whale's voice is

louder than a jet aircrast.

*

The kalahari ground squirrel holds its bushy tail over its head to protect it from the sun.

★

Dolphins live in groups called 'pods'. One pod may have upto a thousand dolphins.

4

The tuft of hair at the end of an elephant's tail is about 45 times thicker than a human hair.

*

Some fish, like the herrings swim in large shoals to deter their predators.

*

Hermit crabs do not have shells of their own. Therefore, they live in the empty shells of other sea animals.

*

The spiny spider crab camouflages itself with seaweed and sponge, fixing them to its spiny shell.

*

The giant clam which lives in the Indo-Pacific ocean is the world's largest clam. Its shell can measure over 1m in width.

+

Electric rays can produce as much as 200 volts of electricity to stun its attacker.

★

Puffer fish can make themselves huge by filling themselves up with water. Their sheer size then discourages their enemies.



What is pronounced like one letter, written with three letters, and belongs to all animals

Eye



What did the cannibal army have for breakfast?

Baked beings.



What dish is out of this world?

A flying saucer.

What monkey is like a flower?

A chimp-pansy.



What flowers do shepherds watch?



"Mummy, does God use our bathroom?"

"No, son, why d'you ask?"

"Because every morning Daddy bangs on the door and shouts, 'Oh, God, are you still in there?"

"Why are you scratch ing yourself?"

"Because nobody else knows where I itch "



Salesman: Is your mother at home, Son?

Boy: Yes

Salesman (knocking on the door for long): I thought you said she was at home.

Boy: She is, but we



The Armchair Traveller

"I've travelled the world twice over, Mct the famous saints and sinners, Poets and artists, kings and queens, Old stars and hopeful beginners, I've been where no-one's been before, Learned secrets from writers and cooks, All with one library ticket To the wonderful world of books".

by Janice James

With Janice's ideas I fully agree,
if you have the time to read a book you
would see,

That you can travel in space and time And return home with a happy smile. Again and again my favourite books I read, Specially storics by Enid Blyton, when

I need

Some time to relax, I join in the fun And enter another world when my Homework is done.

With the "Five-Find-Outers" and Ern Goon. Their dog Buster and Inspector Jenks,

I soon

Solve all musteries before the policeman does

And laugh at Fatty's jokes and disguises.
I join Philip, Dinah, Jack and Lucy Ann,
Shuddering at Philip's unusual pets that
would scare a man,

Finon when Kik! with her nippy beak,
Says "Wipe the door and shut your feet."
I play with Eduard, Humphrey, Edith
and their sister,

I share the children's sorrows and their laughter,

I admire their courage when problems arise,

When they hide in the New Forest after their father dies

Janc Austen's books are fun to read.

To travel to eighteenth century England a minute is all I need,

The foolish remarks of Mrs. Benett
I can hardly miss
When I talk to "proud" Mr. Darcy and
the "prejudiced" Liz.
"Friends, Romans, Countrymen, lend me
your ears,"
When I read "Julius Caesar", it appears.
As if I am in Rome in 44 B.C.,
Waiting in the crowd listening to

Anthony's plea.

I fight in Star Wars and travel in space
With the beautiful Princess Leio in
the rebel base,

With Jedi, Knight Luke and Pilot Han,
And look out for Vader, the evil man.
When reading 'V'—my favourite story
hook, I can now.

Join Freedom Fighters who do not bow
To the powerful aliens who invade
Mother Earth, threatening to destroy
our heritage.
Drug abuse, pollution and terrorism
at first hand,
When reading 'Time' and 'Digest' I am
able to understand,
Famine in Ethiopia and the sufferings of
refugees.
Horrors of World Wars and the need for
Peace.

Maneesha Wanasinghe (16) (Courtesy SICC)

FIFTH NATIONAL BAL KAVI AWARDS 1993

Poems in Hindi are invited from children all over India between the age group of 8 to 12 years and 12 to 16 years, on any one of the topics given below:—

- 1. We the children will illuminate this world with new light
- 2. My character is my adoration.
- 3. Look not at the fault of thy fellow being.

Rules:

- 1. Poems to be written on one side of the paper in neat hand-writing (four copies of each poem).
- 2. Write your name, class, father's name, name and address of the school and home
- 3. Age certificate—age will be counted up to October 31, 1993.
- 4. Last date for sending entries is October 31, 1993, to Balkanji Bari International, B.E. 172. Janakpuri New Delhi 110058.

PEN-FRIENDS CORNER

GIRLS

Those who wish to enrol themselves as members of the Children's World Penfriends Club may do so by sending us the accompanying form. Cut out the form, fill up the details neatly, and mail it to us. As the form helps in indexing preservation of records, its use is a MUST. All those who send in their particulars in the form will get priority in enrolment. Limit your hobbies and choice of countries to have penfriends from to TWO. Whenever members write to their pen-friends it will be advisable to mention their member number

Jahanavi Rai (girl, 14)
MA 1/1/1B, Garden Estate
DLF Qutab Enclave,
Gurgaon, Haryana, India
Swimming, reading
Australia, France

5791
Ashima Khosla (g. 13)
559, Sector 10/D,
Chandigarh, India
Skating. pen-friends
Any country

5792
Gopika Virmani (g. 13)
49/21 East Patel Nagar
New Delhi 110008, India
Painting, dancing
Any country

5793 Jyotsna Garib (g. 13) C/o P.N. Garib Anand Nagar Patta Bohri Jammu 180001, India Badminton, painting Other than India 5794 Sameeksha Belwal (g. 14) 51 Kanlagarh Canal Road P.O. FRI Dehra Dun U.P., India Reading, playing Japan, Nepal 5795 Julie Lakshmi Nair A. (g, 13)

CHILDRE	EN'S WORLD PEN-FRIEN ENROLMENT FORM	NDS CLUB
Member No	(To be filled by office)	Issue dated
	BLOCK LETTERS)	Age*yean
Pen-friend wanted in (Co	ountry)	
* Age limit : 16 years		Signature

GIRLS

At & P.O. Gur Bazaar L.I.G. Flats Thimphu Bhutan Ward No. 4 Rohini Dist. Ranthat Reading Delhi 110085, India Japan, Thailand Nepal Tennis, stamps Reading, stamps U.S.A., Japan India, Russian Federation 5801 5796 Priyanka Bhanot (g, 13) Nancy T. Bright (g, 11) 32 UA (6016) 5806 No. 249, 3rd C Main Jawahar Nagar Hema (g, 15) **OBHR** Layout Near Old Subzi Mandi A-252 Derwala Nagar Chikka Banswadi Delhi 110007 Delhi 110009 Bangalore 560033 Reading Writing letters, drawing Karnataka, India India Japan, India Reading, collecting cards Italy, Germany 5807 5802 5797 Sujata Wangkheirakpam Nun Deni Gyaltshen (g. 13) Vineeta Mutreja (g. 15) (g. 13) Class VI B-25 Satyawati Colony S. Jongkhar Primary Nougmerbung Ashok Vihar, Phase-III Academy Road School Delhi 110052, India East Bhulan Manipur Making friends, writing Imphal 795001, India Stamps letters Dancing India, US.A. Any country U S.A., Japan 5798 5803 5808 Somali Basu (g. 13) Anjana Rai (g. 12) Tahi Chazom (g. 13) 20/9/6 G. L. Bose Sarani Class VI Class VA Post Office Konnagar S. Jongkhar Primary Younghula Primary School Dist. Hooghly School PO Kanglung West Bengal, India East Bhutan Dist. Tashigang Painting Stamps, reading Bhutan U.K. Japan, India Making friends 5799 Any country Roshita Nair (g. 15) 5804 9A Type-III/Sector-III Sangeeta Gupta (g. 15) 5809 Ordnance Factory Estate P. G Box No 3850 Bhavana Vijay Patil (g, 16) Chanda 442601 Kathmandu C/o Mr. Vijay Kumar Patil Maharashtra, India ivepal D 5 Gokul Nandanyan Coins, pen-friends Travelling, reading Co. Op Hsg. Society Any country India, Japan Mahakah Cave Road 5800 Andheri (East) 5805 Sushila Gurung (g, 14) Bombay 400093 Shakuntala Gupia (g. 16) Yangchen Phug High Volleyball, stamps & coins C/o Dr. Ramanand Gupta School India

5810 5816 5821 Sandeep Kedia (b. 15) Abhijit Visaria (b. 12) Surbhit Jain (b, 9) 24 A (UA) Jawahar Nagar 4. Abhinay Colony Rajendra Nagar Delhi 110007, India Drive-In Road Road No. 11F Music, making friends Ahmedabad 380052, Gujarat Paina 800016 Any country Bihar, India Philately, reading Stamps, music 5811 Other than India Any country Ajay Agrawal (b, 15) 33 Friends Enclave 58175822 Sunil M Warang (b, 15) Sandeepan Bhattacharya Dayalbagh, Agra Motho M Warang U.P... India (b, 13) Music, cricket Al. Post-Govt. High School Qtrs. No. A/7, T.R.L. J Navodaya Vidyalaya Any country Township Valvoi, Sattari P.O Belapahar 5812 North Goa, India Dist. Sambalpur 768218 Srijan Aggarwal (boy, 8) Stamps & coins, reading Orissa, India \J-59B Shalimar Bagh Drawing, reading France Japan (L.I.G. Flats) India, Bruner 5818Delhi 110052 5823 Gauray Mehra (b. 12) Painting, reading 672-Sector-14 Fancy (b, 15) Japan, India S o Jaysheel Sompat 131001 5813 Door No C-3 Harvana India Sum; nth P. Khandhi (b. 13) Kargal 577421 Cricket, s'amps Sri Ramakrichna Vidyashala Shanoga USA Japan Yadavgiri Karnataka, India Mysore 570020 5819 Horse riding, sports Karnataka India Fom Tillo (b. 15) Any country Mandohn, pen-friends C'o C'D. Thomas Telephones 5824 Any country 11 No. 38 2154, Matha Surmeet S Bhatia (b, 13) 5814 Co Amarjeet S Bhatia Nagar Nitin Luthra (b. 13) Cochm 682017, Kerala, 21B 9. New Rohtak Road 29/15 West Pafel Nagar India New Delhi 110005 New Delhi 110018 Collecting stickers, cricket Reading, pen triends Cricket Any country Any country U.S.A. 5820 5825 5815 Vlanoj Manwam (b. 14) Anand Sharma (b, 16) Pankaj Kumar (b. 12) B-150 New Colony 12-3, Laxmi Apartment C'o Gumla Tobocco Shop Rupam Circle Kondli Ratu Road Bhayanagar 364001 PO. Khichripur Ranchi Gujarat, India Delhi 110091 Bihar, India Collecting stamps, reading Making friends Travelling, cricket India Australia India Any country

5826 M. Vijay Shekhar (b, 16)	New Delhi 110012 Stickers, Key chains	5837 Raunak Ahluwalia (b, 13)
Sandur Residential School	India, Pakıstan	10, Rakab Ganj Road
Shankara House	5832	New Delhi 110001
Sandur	Vikas Jaın (b. 11)	Reading, keeping pets
Bellary 583119	L-30, Kailash Colony,	Bhutan, Nepal
Karnataka, India	IInd floor	5838
Reading, stamps Any country	New Delhi 110048	Gulamnabi (b, 14)
·	Slamps, cricket Japan, New Zealand	S.o S.G. Choudhari
5827	~	Opp. S.M. English School
T G Manikandan (b, 15) Door No. 11, 5th Street	5833	SIT Extension, Tumkur Karnataka, India
('o-operative Colony	Tarique Zaman (b. 15) S o Dr. F. Zaman	Reading, drawing
Vellore Road	White House Compound	Other than India
Tiruchengodu 637211	Gaya, Bihar, India	
Tamil Nadu, India	('ycling, reading	5839
Pen-friends, chess	Any country	Suvir Berry (b, 11)
Any country	5834	S-202, Greater Kailash, Part-II
5828	Hriday Geham (b, 11)	New Delhi 110048
Aman Deep Sethi (b, 13)	4 2. Metcalfe Colony	Table tennis, reading
J-7, 112. Rajouri Garden	F.M.C. Road	U.K
New Delhi 110027	Agra Cantt. 282007 (UP)	7010
Reading cricket	India	5840 Amit Ka ^t huria (b. 16)
Australia, Spain	Stamps, coms	21/54, Old Rajinder Nagar
5829	Any country	New Delhi 110060
Raja Padung (b, 14)	5835	Movies, music
Fransalian School	Sunian Preet Singh Arora	India
P.O. Jonai Dist. Dhemaji 787060	(b. 16)	5841
Assam, India	J-11 55, Rajouri Garden	Luhar Dinesh C. (b, 13)
Reading, pen-friends	New Delhi 110027 Table tennis, movies	287, Anand Nagar
Germany, U.K.	U.S.A.	Kareli Baug
5 83 0	5836	Baroda 390022, Gujarat
Rajesh Kumar (b, 14)	Chirag Bankim Shah (b. 16)	India
H. No. 130, A-Block	12/12 Shiv Shahi	Stamps, music
Shastri Nagar	('o-Operative	Japan, Russian Federation
Meerut, (U.P.), India	Housing Society	5842
Cricket, music	Dr AB Road, Worh	M. Jayaraj (b. 16)
Saudi Arabia, Portugal	Bombay 400025 Maharashtra	•
5831	India	Thukaram Gate
Manu Tyagi (b. 13)	Stamps, sports	Lallaguda
RB-5. Inderpuri	U.S.A., Australia	Secunderabad 500017

Andhra Pradesh, India Stamps, pen-friendship Any country

5843
Abhishek Gosain (b, 15)
Shanti Niwas
Fee Pani.
Near Chambaghat
Soian, Himachal Pradesh
India
Music, sports
U.S.A., U.K

5844 Himanshu Goenka (b. 11) D-11, 12, Model Town Delhi 110009 Stamps, singing U.S.A., U.K.

5845
Randhir K Galkwad (b. 16)
144. Abubakar Chawl.
Near Church
Dharavi
Bombay, Maharashtia, India
Music, sports
Other than India

5846
Neeraj Panjwani (b. 14)
A-1/279, Safdarjang
Enclave
New Delhi 110029
Swimming, music
U.S.A., New Zealand

5847 Arihant Jain (b, 10) C-46, Neeti Bagh New Delhi 110049 Coins, stamps Japan, Austria 5848
Robin Doley (b, 16)
Fransalian School
P.O. Jonai, Dist. Dhemaji
Assam, India
Riding, stickers
France, Argentina

Rakesh Regisow (b, 12)
C/O Head Master
Govt. Secondary School.
Thrizino
Post Thrizino
Dist West Kameng.
Arunachal Pradesh 790001
India
Acting, reading jokes
Any country

G. Kirubeshwaran (b, 12) 55. Chandrasekar Puram Salai Road Trichy-18. Tamil Nadu India Stamps. sticker collecting U.S.A., Germany

5850

5851
Ajay Raghuvanshi (b. 14)
1762 Gulabi Bagh
Delhi 110007
Science, reading
Any country

5852
K.K. Manikuttan (b, 11)
Kailasom
H. No. 49/913A
Subhash Nagar
P.O. Edappilly
Kerala 682024, India
Reading, drawing
Any country

5853
Bikram Mandal (b, 15)
C/o Mr. B. Mandal
Hotel Prince
Dt. P.O. Goalpara
Assam 783101, India
Karate, craft
Singapore, U.S.A.

5854
Aman Gupta (b. 10)
8110 Sec. B, Pocket-XI
Vasant Kunj
New Delhi 110030
Reading, conservation
U K., France

5855
Nishant Jain (b, 14)
(', o Mr. A.K. Jain
Kishan Flour Mills Campus
Railway Road
Meerut, (U.P.) India
Stamps, music
Any country

5856
M. Satya Narayan (b, 14)
Sufley House, 2968
Sainik School
Bhubhaneswar, Orissa. India
Pen-friends, sports
Any country

5857
Muhammad Azim (b. 11)
4/1212, Haq Nishan
Sir Syed Nagar
Aligarh. (U.P.), India
Stamps, reading
Any country
5858

Niladri S Maulik (b. 10) 103. Minto Road Hostel New Delhi 110002

Stamps, reading 5864 Rohini U.S.A., U.K. C.A. Mohammed Thalha New Delhi 110085 (b. 13) Music, reading 5859 47-A. Valluvar Street India, Japan Anand Karkhanis (b. 13) Sivanadha Colony Sec. IV/813. R.K. Puram Combatore, Tamil Nadu 5870 New Delhi 110022 India Chefen Pelzang (b. 14) Western music, reading Stamps, tennis Std. VIII U.S.A., U.K. Brazii, Saudi Arabia Jigme Sherubling High School 5860 5865 PO Khaling Shailesh R. Gurnule (b, 12) Sural P Shah (b, 14) Fastern Bhutan Q.No 31/A, Type III, "Suraj" Bhutan Sector-III Ashok Nagar Watching video collecting Nipani 581237, Karnalaka Dist Chandrapura all kinds of objects Maharashira 442501, India Japan USA Stamps, reading Stamps drawing Any country Australia, Japan 5871 5866 5861 Omitvali M. Grigo (b. 11) Himanshu Gupta (b. 12) Balbahadur Subba (b. 16) C o CM. Kumar Clo Shri S.C. Gupta Class-VI New 9/31/6, NIP.S P.W I Office, Railway Road Kangpara Prunary School Eklahre, Nasik Road Ghaziabad 202001 (UP) East Bhutan, Bhutan Nasık 422105, Maharashtra India Dance India Skaling, swimming Other than Bhutan Canada USA Hongkong 5862 5867 5872 Pankaj Bilandani (b. 14) Jay S Som (b 10) Jitender Kumar (b. 15) Railway Quarter No. 5A. IX '1234, Subhash Road Sree Krishna Niwas Type-III Gandhi Nagar Trikkave Road Above Rly. Officers Rest Delhi 110031 P() Ponani House Stamps watching T\ Dist. Malappuram Junagadh 362001, Gujarat Kerala 678577. India Any country India Stamps, friendship Pen-friends, stamps 5868 Any country Any country Ankur Chaudhary (b, 13) 87. New Gandhi Nagar 5863 5873 Ghaziabad, (U.P.), India Ravi Datt Kothari (b. 15) Mukesh Rana (b. 16) Stamps, coins 50/II. Lal Bahadur Sadan W-74. Sector-12 Any country Gole Market Noida, (U.P.), India New Delhi 110001 5869 Chaziabad Music, Foolball Sandeep Juneja (b. 16) Paulting, singing -A 272, Prashant Vihar India. France U.S.A., Australia

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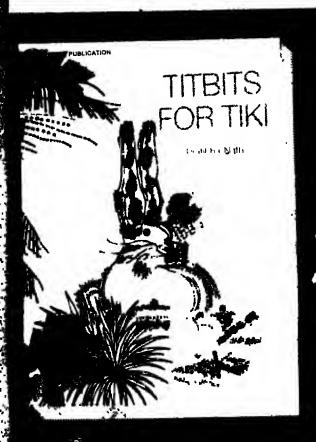
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Design and Layout

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Payal Chandra

Dear Readers...

Lights... many hued and many splendoured. Talking about lights when the Festival of Lights, Deepawali is upon us, is most appropriate. The lights are joyous and full of expectancy—a release from darkness and a welcome for Lakshmi who augurs well for all that goes with hope. But there are lights and lights and sometimes, suddenly. out of the blue, one of them picks you up and pins you down, just when you expect it the least. We all know about spotlights that illuminate only a part of the stage, leaving others in an area of darkness so that the 'spotlighted' can deliver his piece with a poignancy that has maximum impact. Even with the spotlight on you, you know how vital to the action those left in the darkness are and were it not for their 'dark' and silent support, the 'spotlight area' would not have the desired effect.

And so we sit in manmade smugness, hoping that the spotlight will beam itself our way Till one fine day the Earth shrugs and shifts her burden and the world's spotlight is focussed on an area of such devastation and darkness that man's preoccupation

with limelight, spotlight and festivals of light seem like a cruel joke. Then, just when you are reeling under a deafening blow like the Maharashtra earthquake and wondering at how the Earth can plunge you into nothingness in a moment, the Earth lights up with yet another wonder. In a totally hopeless situation, the ultimate miracle takes place. Baby Priyanka Venkatrao, only 18 months old, and buried under the rubble for four days without food and water is found alive! Sumeet Baxi "only doing his duty", risks his life to go and look for her "dead body" and returns with the child alive. It is her smile that people, especially police officer, DIG K.K. Kashyap "will never forget all his life."

Earthquakes come and earthquake's go. They leave destruction behind. But it is that one smile that lights up the world. It is that smile and that light which remains in man's memory. It is that which becomes his poetry and his painting. It is that which becomes his literature and his legacy for the future. It is this 'light' that seems to have captured the imagination of the contributors to Your Pages. Each article,

poem or story seems like a poignant experience, an enriching, ennobling, cathartic moment in their lives. They seem to have thought deeply, felt emotionally, evaluated rationally and put down poetically. To the winners and to all those whose articles have been published in these pages heartiest congratulations. The spotlight is squarely on you and it is welldeserved. To the thousands who sent in entries but are not featured here—an overwhelmed thanks for making the contest so keen, and so tough to judge. Reading these little literary masterpieces from fiction to factual happenings, sci-fi, historical fiction and fantasy, one thing is very clear—children have their hearts in their right places and their heads are firmly on their shoulders, they are caring, loving human beings, willing to share... and that is more than what one can wish for. This festival of lights, add the light of these literary pieces to your string of 'lights' and illuminate the world with words and feelings. We shall took forward to your reactions...

Happy Diwali and God bless you...

EDITOR





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Class X St Agnes's High School Mangalore

NDIA can steal the traveller's heart and brand his soul like no other country. For centuries its landscape, its sounds and smells, its people have stimulated the imagination of Westerners, causing them often to marvel and sometimes to despair.

"So far as I am able to judge," wrote Mark Twain, "nothing has been left undone, either by man or nature to make India the most extraordi-

Illustrations: Viky Arya

nary country that the Sun visits on his round. Nothing seems to have been forgotten, nothing overlooked."

Twain, the American writer and traveller, was sent to India in 1896 to describe India. He nearly threw away his pen in defeat.

"Always," he wrote, "when you have come to the end of her tremendous specialities and have finished hanging tags upon her as... the land of plague, the land of famine, the land of grant illusions, the land of stupendous mountains,

and so forth, another speciality crops up and another tag is required."

It was best, he decided, to throw away the labels and call it simply the land of wonders.

India has experienced hundreds of years of foreign invasion and influence, yet it still somehow manages to absorb and change everything the world cares to fling at it, remaining at root untouched. India, in a word is different, which is why the rest of the world chooses to see it as mysterious.

Resentments do some-

times flare up in awful bouts of communal violence. However, considering that India is more notable for its tolerance than its rifts, much of the time the rich co-exist peacefully with the poor, Muslims with Hindus. northerners with southerners, imperial relics with national institutions. India even achieves the feat of abiding in several centuries at once. Today, the contrast between ancient and modern lifestyles is even more acute. India, long an industrial nation, is becoming a force to be reckoned with in computer and space research: it has designed and launched its own satellite for remote sensing and mass communication. In the very cities where beggars walk the streets

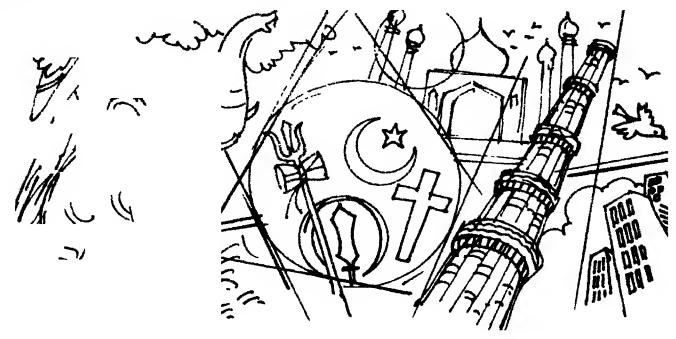
picturing the very por rait of misery, there exists a highly advanced technology to rival anything in the West.

Each of the states and territories has a character very much its own. From one to the next, the landscape can change from arid savannah to tropical rainforest, from featureless plains to soaring mountains. Their people, their history and their traditions vary just as dramatically. Consequently, between the Himalayas and Cape Comorin, it is virtually impossible to generalise.

These wonders and amazing differences of India have been described by writers ever since the Greeks, the first ambassadors of Western civilization, reached this great country. They have left

India as a series of isolated scenes, all true but only fractions of a greater truth. The Taj Mahal at midnight, poverty at noon, the dust of the listless plains, the colour and clamour of the bazaars, elephants moving gently through lush forest. Running through nearly all the images are the symbols of the Sun and waterunyielding heat, great rivers. They are the sources of life throughout the world but nowhere more obviously so than in India.

Few other places on earth can produce such a bizarre composition. India is the land where anything is possible, where fantasies are almost a matter of course, where all flavours are very strong!





Class XI Sardar Patel Vidyalaya New Delhi Illustrations : Viky Arya

As I walked down the meadows white
I saw a child in the moonlight bright
Moonbeams bathed his pure white soul
Something holy something divine hung in

He smiled at me and laughed so gay

And in that night he asked me to write a

song for him

And then I wrote a song for him to sing

And then I wrote a song for him to sing

He laughed with infant glee

He vowed that he would sing it to the

world

Then he vanished I don't know where And in the distance I heard a nightingale's voice

So pure so calm I can't explain
Now every holy moonlit night
I search for him high and low
But no one hears my cry
My voice just echoes back
But every holy moonlit night
I hear a nightingale sing my song.





A BRIEF SHOWER

The black clouds mingle together in love
And pour their heart out on the world
Musically the raindrops fall
It's over the brief shower has ended
I strain my ears and listen
Pit Pat... the drops settled on the leaves
fall

From one leaf to another step by step A little puddle has formed on the road The sparrows overjoyed play in it My heart to makes merry with them.



how & then

Mohor Ray (11) Class VII Birla Vidya Niketan New Delhi



Yesterday I had been a boy.
Who dreamt of growing into a man.
Today I am a big man.
Who is tempted by his childhood days.
Then I faced the stranger world in the shade of parental love.
Now I am all by myself facing the selfish world.
I had been lost, my body and soul, in utterly wild but beautiful fantasy.
I am now awake, my body and soul, trying to find my way through a maze of facts.

Yesterday's boy is today's man.

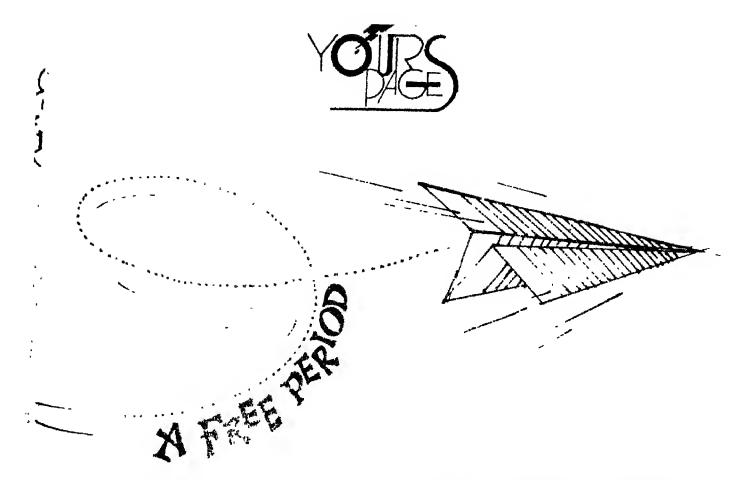
I had been a carefree child,
not bothering about what next?
But now I am a serious man
concerned what would be there, next.
Then I had been flexible as day,
Now I am as cold and stiff as metal
Yesterday there was an ambition
of marching to manhood;

Today there is a dream of retreating to boyhood.

Man has yearned, yearns and will continue to yearn

To be a perfect form composed of, the simplicity of childhood and freedom of adulthood.

CHILDREN'S WORLD NOVEMBER 1993



FREE period is always welcomed by the students because it is so amusing. I myself being a student, admit that the thing I like most in my school life is a free period. How I enjoy it!

I have participated in every activity that students enjoy in a free period. Every possible mischief is done in such periods one by one.

Whenever the students come to know that the period is going to be free, first an attack is made on the chalk box. In no time the chalk box becomes only a box. Students practice shooting chalks

at each other and pieces of chalk sticks can be seen all over the floor within a minute. This game is so enjoyable that even the most sincere student of the class is, so called, obliged to participate.

Then suddenly the shooting place is converted into an aerodrome. Paper aeroplanes fly over and within no time the notebooks are made thinner than ever. And of course along with the aeroplanes, there has to be some noise, so that duty is performed by the prefect who roars at his classmates. That's how the classroom even sounds like an aerodrome.

When the classroom

Mahima Gupta (15) Class X St.Thomas's English Med.School Meerut

floor is all covered with pieces of chalk sticks and paper aeroplanes then someone discovers a tiny, round thing that can be any fruit such as a guava or an orange or an apple or a pomegranate or a ... Then all sorts of games are played with it. Volleyball and throwball and hockey and cricket and football and basketball and what not, until and unless that little thing gets squashed.

By now the map of the classroom has changed totally. It could be a fine



puzzle identifying the original place of any desk or chair.

But the game goes on and when the players are tired, they try the next best thing to pass the free period, that is—drawing. Wild horses of imagination run at high velocity and high acceleration. New models of manimate organisms are designed on the blackboard. All kinds of comical names are also written below them. Really, if any one could collect all the designs he would have a fantastic collection of super natural postures.

But there are some

students who have little interest in games or art. while they are good dancers or instrument players. So they start their own orchestra and desks take the place of tabla and dholak and the dancers are the sleeping back benchers whom one can always find awake in free periods only. Singing or rather shouting and velling is contributed by the prefect who actually wants the students to remain quiet but unknowingly becomes the leader of the students' orchestra. Other students contribute to the chorus by hooting.

This orchestra is so

attractive that the teachers from the other classes are attracted to it, but instead of appreciation they give lectures and punishment to the orchestra party. The most active participants are sometimes even rewarded by an order to get out of the class. Among such rewards, the highest (Param Veer Reward) is awarded by the Principal.

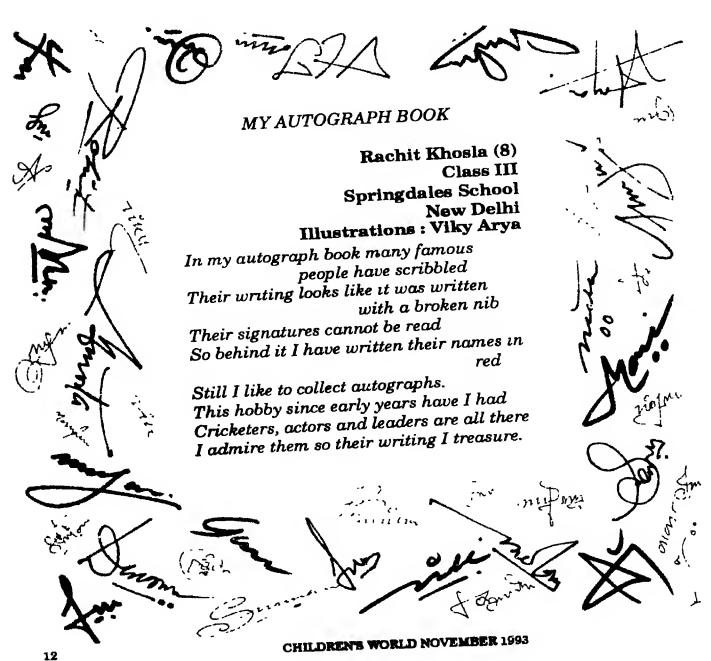
At this time, the most pitiable condition is of the prefect. He is the one who has to tolerate most of the teacher's anger for not performing his duty though he always tries his best to perform it.

In punishment students cannot move from their places or play, but "where there is a will there is a way". While standing also the students continue their mischievous activities and next they organise a sort of stage show. A show

that is a mal itself. In this show, tion and mimicry of teachers is the highlight. How a particular teacher talks and walks and teaches and punishes and scolds and ...

This show continues until the period is over or till the ghost of mischief leaves the students.

Anyway, the conclusion is that a free period is the most amusing and enjoyable time that comes in every student's school life, but the most unfortunate aspect of it is that it comes only occasionally.



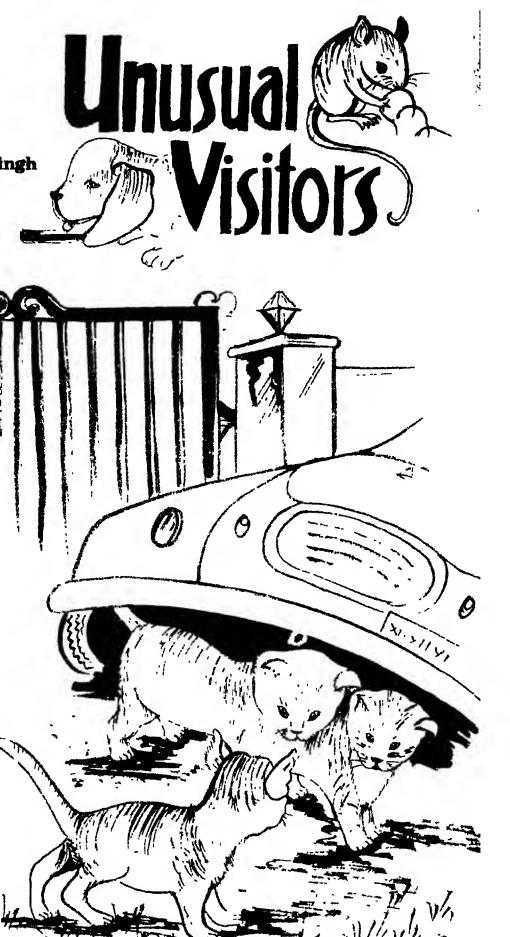
Anumeet Bagga (9)
Class IV
Sacred Heart
Convent School
Ludhiana
Illustrations: Leena Singh

HE visitors I am going to tell you about are not any

relatives or friends but are the animals who visited our house at different times and took shelter under our car.

The first visitors were three little kittens. It was during our last summer holidays. I had found them hiding under the carl one morning. They were so cute and lovely with soft fur. I had liked them so much that I wanted to make them my pets. I even made a bed for them in a cardboard box but perhaps the mother cat did not like it and took them away. I was very disappointed.

The next visitor was a big field rat. It was most unwelcome and gave us a lot of trouble. It was dark grey in colour, very fat and ugly. It would hide under the car bonnet and do khut-khut. We were afraid that it would nibble some wires. It was very difficult to drive the rat away. If we tried to hit it with a pole, it would hide under the engine and



save itself. And if we poked it with a stick, it would run away and come back later. How I wished my kittens were there, they would have had a lovely feast.

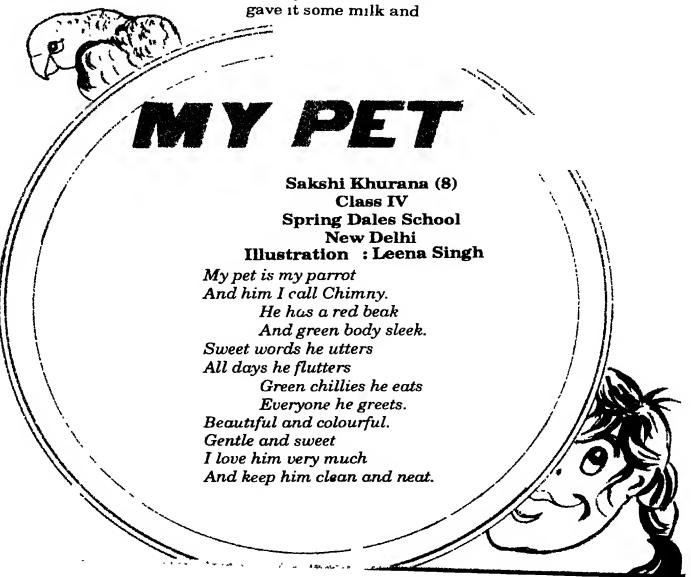
Then one day we made a plan and went to the Rose Garden for a picnic. The rat went with us sitting under the car bonnet. When we came back after spending a lot of time there, the rat was no longer in the car. I am sure it could not find its

way back. Finally we lad

The next visitor was a puppy. It was a cold winter night. It was raining heavily. We were sitting in the warmth of our quilts getting ready to sleep. Suddenly we heard the sound of someone wailing. We went out and saw a small brown puppy. It was wet and dirty and seemed hungry and cold. How did it get here all alone? Perhaps it had lost its way or its mother. We gave it some milk and

bread. It ate happily. We covered it with some old clothing. In the next few days every morning it would run away and roam here and there. But every night it would squeeze in through the gate and settle under the car. This went on for a few days. Then one day it went out and did not return. Perhaps it had found its mother or a better place to spend the nights.

Now I wonder what will be next.



HE strangest thing happened to me the other day. As 💉 usual, I woke up while it was still dark, put on my track suit and came out to the field to jog.

It is one of my old habits to watch the sunrise every day. I enjoy watching how the darkness slowly gives way to the red glow in the eastern sky.

I stopped jogging and looked at my watch. The moon was becoming paler all right and the stars were gradually disappearing. But the eastern sky still refused to dispel its gloom.

Suddenly I looked at the other end of the horizon. It was almost unbelievable. The western sky had turned crimson. 'Could it be a big fire or a battery of halogen lamps?' I wondered. I was not sure about what lay to the west.

By now the darkness was completely gone and a giant fireball or rather a part of it was clearly visible through the misty air. Suddenly I heard a huge commotion and noisy footsteps of numerous men running. Was there a cross country race that I did not know of? Gradually the

too followed them like a Sudeshna

Chakraborty (10) Class V St. Agnes's School, Hilli Illustrations: Gautam Roy

din became louder and I heard voices crying, "Run, run ... the sun, the sun..."

I ran towards the voices, grabbed an old man and asked him what it was all about.

"Can't you see the sun rising from the west? It is a catastrophe and we shall perish."

Some people ran to the nearby tall tower to get a better view of the most incredible phenomenon. I sheep in the flock. But someone prompter than all the rest had already reached the top of the tower. He stood barebodied and whether his beard was wet from a bath or from the morning dew, I cannot say. He called so loud that every one of us standing 150 feet beneath could hear every word he uttered.

He cried, "You puny earth-dwellers I wanted a pole and a foothold outside this planet to nudge it from its orbit. You didn't oblige. Instead you sent lesser beings to the moon to outdo my scheme. But you were fools, for I am still the superior, for I have made

the earth rotate one eighty degrees about this turret." Thus saying he pointed to the tower on which he stood.

"That's not possible. Get that grey-bearded fool. Arrest him and hand him over to the police," cried one of us.

"Who said that?" boomed the voice. But our spokesman was already trembling, face white with fear.

The voice continued,
"I'm the Archimedes of
Syracuse. From now on
you shall call the east 'the
west' and the west 'the
east'."

"Can we now call ourselves the westerners?" asked a man in jeans.

"What will happen to the North South cooperation?" was the next question.

But there was none to answer. The apparition faded gradually into thin air. The sun was shining brightly and the mist was completely gone.

Several days have passed since then and the story has become stale gossip. But it was remarkable that not a single newspaper reported this story. Perhaps there was nothing to report.

The newspapers had all become "SWENPAPERS".



ANUL, THE SOCCER STAR



O, Ma, if I eat now, I'll be late for soccer practice. I promise I'll eat when I come back." Anul was out of the door.

Soccer was his life.
Whenever he had free time he would practise.
He was the best player on his team and you could bet he would score a goal when he had the ball.
Anul had disadvantages, though. There were times when he could barely breathe, leave alone play soccer.

"Hurry up, Anul! The game is about to start!" cried his best friend Shankar.

"I'm coming." Anul ran into the field.

The whistle blew. The game started.

But it was one of those days. Anul and his team fumbled passes and missed many chances to score. It was not so much that the other team was better. Anul's team just defeated itself, 7-3.

One boy on the other team, Manuraj Mathur, envied Anul his talent in soccer. Once, during a game, he tripped Anul and hurt him so badly that he needed stitches on the left side of his forehead. The referees had not seen the foul, so Manuraj did not get into trouble. Anul had told the referee, but the referee did not believe him.

Manuraj was gloating today. Winning 7-3, and against Anul's team, too. What an achievement!

That night, as Anul lay awake replaying the game in his mind, he remembered that the soccer finals were next week. His team would be playing Manuraj's for the state junior soccer championship.

Anul knew that his team relied on him. The only thing that would stop him from playing well was his breathing problem. To prevent that from happening he, like always, took the medicines for his lungs.

Early the next evening, Shankar and Anul decided to go see a movie.

On the way, Manuraj and his friends stopped them on the sidewalk.

"You're not going to win

the finals game, get it? We are. Because if you do, I'll beat you up."

Manuraj and his friends started laughing. Shankar and Anul walked away, trying to ignore the taunts.

But Anul felt that Manuraj was asking for it. "We're going to win that game, Manuraj, and we'll just see who gets



Immediately he wished he hadn't reacted. Fighting was not the answer. He had just said that because he didn't want Manuraj to mistake him for a weakling. The best way to solve this problem was to win that game so that Manuraj and company were exposed for the big talkers that they

were.

The big day arrived. The day of the finals game.

Anul was the centre forward and his team won the toss. Anul's kickoff shot sent the ball behind the defensive lineup and close to the goalie.

Ashwin from the other team retrieved the ball, and dribbled down the



field towards Anul's goal. He faked a pass to Vinod, then nudged it to Manuraj. Manuraj grinned as he came down the field looking at Anul. Anul, unable to intercept, looked on as Akash rushed Manuraj.

Manuraj took a long shot over Akash's head. The ball was a streak of fire. The goalie did not have a chance. Manuraj and his team laughed. "Now who's going to win?" he sneered.

The game continued. Anul and Manuraj seemed locked in private battle, colliding, stumbling, all but hitting each other for the prize, the ball.

At half-time, Manuraj's team was ahead 1-0. Anul ran to the corner of the field to get a drink of water from his water bottle. But to his surprise, Manuraj and his friends were there, rummaging his things. When they saw him, Manuraj got up and walked up to Anul. He held Anul by the collar.

"Look, you tried to score. If you win this game, I'm going to really beat you up. I'm serious." He pushed Anul to the ground and went back into the field. While Anul lay on the ground thinking about what had just happened, an empty water bottle was flung at his face.

The second half started. Anul didn't care what Manuraj would do to him. He was determined to win the game. From the kickoff, Jay retrieved the ball and dribbled down the sidelines when Vinod got into his path.

'Oh, no!' thought Jay. He was no good against the taller, heavier Vinod. Vinod shouldered Jay aside and zoomed down the field, dodging Anul's team-mates and from the top of the 'D', fiented, confused Anul's goalie and sent the ball into a high, curving arc and into the goal.

'2-0,' Anul thought. 'We probably won't win this one.' Anul coughed. 'Not now!' He gagged. Anul was having trouble breathing again.

The referee strode up. "Are you okay, Anul?"

He couldn't answer because he couldn't breathe.

The referee sent him to the benches and asked him to rest a bit.

Anul saw Shankar retrieve the ball from the kickoff. Four minutes till game's end, the clock said. "Come on, fellows!"
Let's win this game!"
With this hoarse halfshout, Anul groped for the
inhaler in his pockets.

He put his mouth around the inhaler, struggling to hold his breath as the aerosol mist spread slowly, neverendingly, through his respiratory system. "Once more," Anul told himself. "One more inhalation and I will be able to get back into the game."

One minute and thirty-two seconds left on the clock. There was some air in his lungs now. Anul put the inhaler into his mouth, blew the air out of his lungs, curled his tongue under the mouthpiece, pressed the inhaler down and drew his breath in sharply. One, two, three... He counted till ten.

Slowly, the gasping stopped. Anul began to breathe normally.

Fifty-five seconds left on the clock. Anul walked into the field. Jayesh, from Manuraj's team had the ball. Anul closed in, swung his right foot at the ball and stopped it in mid-air as Jayesh, deceived, slowed, turning himself and the ball away from Anul. Anul saw the puzzled look on Jayesh's

face and knew that his feint had worked.
Quickly, he leaped past Jayesh's flank and scooped the ball away with his toes. Darting past the astonished halfback, Anul sent the ball crashing into the nets.

'2-1,' Anul thought. Forty seconds to go. Manurai had the ball after the kickoff. He wove in and out and stood poised to kick the ball past Anul's goalie. But the goalie leaped like a cat even as Manuraj kicked the ball, somersaulted as he landed with the ball safe in his hands and, from the top of the 'D' kicked it deep into the other side of the field. Anul trapped the ball under his feet, swung around, prayed hard, and shot the ball past Manuraj's goalie. Another goal!

2-2. Fifteen seconds to go. The kickoff was a blur. All Anul knew was that he had the ball. He started running down the field as fast as he could, saying repeatedly, "We will win! We will win!"

Six seconds left on the clock. "Come on!" he screamed to himself, running faster and even faster. He could see the goalposts in the distance.

Four seconds left. Als heart was beating unbearably fast. 'No time for breathing problems now,' he thought to himself. The goalposts loomed. Two seconds. Now he could see the threads of the goal net. He kicked the ball with all his power and might, while screaming incoherently. The ball went in and the whistle blew.

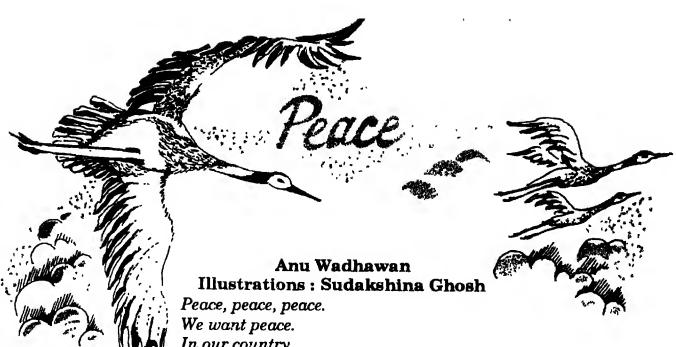
"We won! We won! We won!" He screamed with his friends as they held him high above their heads. Anul was holding up a big, golden trophy.

So it came to be that a humbled Manuraj confessed to Anul that he was sorry about the way he had behaved. They never fought, thereafter. They became good friends.

The New Class and the

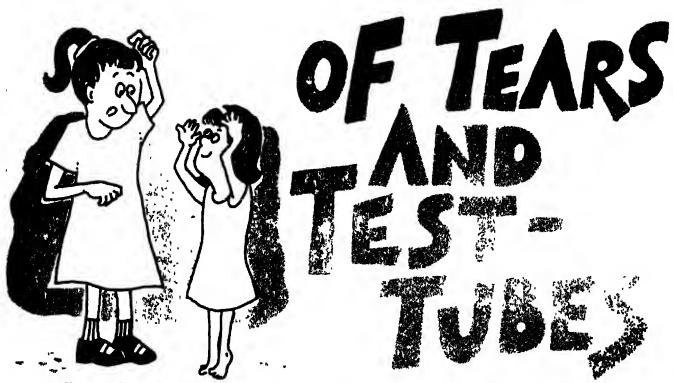
Durba Chatterjee (14)
Class IX
Sardar Patel Vidyalaya
New Delhi

In April '92 I went through Two sudden changes. Change of class, Change of school, New teachers, new rules. Different tables, different chairs Different textbooks, Different fears, New outfits. New trends, New environment New friends Different feelings Towards friends and boys. Growing up, looking nice. Really a mind-boggling change, Which can give joy, And can give pain.



In our country, In our city, In our street. Peace, peace, peace We want peace. Riots, assassinations, violence Will do no more. Hatred, discrimination, exploitation are here to devour. Love, harmony, secularism will reign all over that's divine disposal and it has to grow more and more. Why don't the people realise, Peace is the mere device for a country's progress and check internal strife. The people have to be more wise, lest bribery, corruption, falsehood will rise. We all have to come together, or the dreams of Mahatma Gandhi will be shattered.

To save the country from foreign attack, peace within the country we can't afford to lack. Peace, peace, peace We want peace. In our country In our city, In our street.



Smita Saxena (15)
Class XI
Convent of Jesus and
Mary
New Delhi
Illustrations:
Chaitali Chatterjee

OMING back from school one day, my sister announced that she had to make a project on tears. We had to fill a whole test-tube with tears. So we sat down to think.

"We don't even have a baby in our house," Didi grumbled. "And our results are not expected soon, either. I see no possibility of collecting tears," saying this, she began pacing the floor.

Poor *Didi*. She was really perturbed. It was one of those life and death matters.

Then a brilliant idea flashed across my mind.

"How about chopping onions?" I suggested.

"Marvellous!" Didi shouted and jumped up, hugging me and patting me at the same time.

So we took out Ma's beautiful shining knives and armed with them we marched off to the kitchen.

CHOP! CHOP! CHOP! came the noise from the kitchen.

We went on chopping till tears started rolling down our cheeks. Ma, curious to know what was happening, peeped in. She was pleasantly surprised to find us in the kitchen. But when she saw heaps

1



of chopped onions surrounding us and her prim and proper kitchen looking like a junkyard she shouted, "Out with both of you!" Alas! By then we had filled just one-fourth of a test tube.

Quite disheartened but undeterred we put on our thinking caps again. After much racking of our brains, *Didi* came up with



a bright idea, "How about lighting a chulha?" she suggested.

So we both started collecting sticks for the chulha. We lit it with great difficulty. The black smoke was awful. It irritated our eyes and soon tears started rolling down our cheeks. Our faces turned red with the heat. Our vision grew

hazy and Ma had to take us to an opthalmologist. He prescribed some eyedrops and charged two hundred rupees as consultation fee.

After reaching home, Ma gave us a good scolding. While we were being scolded I remembered that if one gets a beating, tears come automatically. I was hoping Ma would give Didi a thrashing but unfortunately she didn't oblige. After having dinner we were sent off to bed. Alas! By that time we had collected just about half a test-tube of tears. We were very sad when we went to bed.

The next day my sister had her practical examinations. After keeping her test-tube in the test-tube stand, she went to get some chemical from the teacher in the adjoining room. Just then a girl

looking for an empty testtube spotted Didi's test tube (the one filled with tears). Thinking it was plain and simple water she poured the contents into the wash-basin. Just then my sister entered the room. When she saw the last drops going down the drain she burst into tears. She wept uncontrollably and could not be comforted. Her future seemed bleak, without the test-tube of tears and so tears poured down her eyes. Just then a brilliant idea struck her best friend. Before any more of those precious drops got wasted she got hold of an empty test-tube and placed it under Didi's eyes. Soon a whole testtube was filled. Everything was normal again and my sister came out of the laboratory, red-eyed but smiling





Illustrations : Chaitali Chatterjee

Class X
Fr. Agnel School
New Delhi
HOULD I take
this bottle? How
much will Lalaji
pay for this?' thought
Tatu as he rummaged in
the heap of refuse lying
beside the children's park.

Tatu was a seven-yearold innocent boy, but had the dignity of a man. He knew he had to hurry for any moment Raghu, the bully, could come. Just two years older to Tatu but hefty and strong, Raghu always snatched the things that would fetch a good price, from the little ragpickers who would so painstakingly collect them.

He was hurrying towards the warehouse watching prudently for any sight of Raghu and his *chelas* from the corner of his eye, when he caught sight of little Rani rushing towards him.

"She's got some good news," he uttered aloud as she was bubbling with excitement.

"You know what? Today, at Lalaji's warehouse a big man came to me, asked my name and took some other information which he noted down in a small diary. He told me he will come tomorrow with a video camera. Oh! Tatu do you have money to buy a frock for me? This one is so torn and tattered," burst out Rani.

Tatu had saved some money in a tin box he had once picked up from the waste. He clutched his younger sister's hand and ran to their jhuggi.

He had just emptied the box when he lifted his eyes to see the bully Raghu standing in front of him wearing a floral shirt and a new black pant. Tatu couldn't help feeling jealous of Raghu's smart dress and at once decided to buy a floral shirt for himself as soon as he grew up. Tatu could not imagine Raghu would act as mean and avaricious as he did. He took away all the money Tatu had saved for years.

He smiled craftily at Rani and said, "Thanks for letting me know about the television people," he had overheard them. "I will buy a new shirt for tomorrow now."

Tatu could not hear it this time, and was overcome with anger. In his rage he flung himself on Raghu and gave him several punches Tatu couldn't do anything as Raghu unravelled himself from his strong arms.

"The TV people would never picturise a boy as frail and ugly as you," upbraided Raghu and walked off with an air of dignity.

Tatu was very furious
He threw the tin box at
Raghu and shouted, "Wait
for some time, I will
defeat you. I won't let you
bully us, you mean,
unpardonable fellow. You
will learn a lesson for
being so cruel. I will
vanquish you."

When Raghu, his chelatand Tatu with Rani reached Lalaji's ware-house the next morning the people from the television company were waiting there.

Raghu shoved Tatu away and said, "Look how ugly Tatu is."

"Wow! What taste in dressing up," added one of his chelas.

Tatu was a little subdued by this comment. His eyes were covered with a film of anger but his helplessness made tears well up in his eyes. His young, innocent, uncomplicated mind could think of nothing to do then. The passion in him was so strong that he couldn't bear the mocking comments passed by the boisterous bullies.

The anger left him so weak that he sat there brooding silently with his head bent down in dejection. It was then that he was shaken out of his thoughts. A man was standing, facing him, with his camera crew. He said to them, "We can't interview those boys, they seem so well-bred.

Mmm... this boy is perfect, a poverty stricken chap he seems.

"My dear, could you please tell us a few things about yourself," he continued speaking into the mike.

How happy this made Tatu; for a second he couldn't believe his ears! 'Had they really left Raghu and come to interview him? All his indignation and dejection gave way to triumph and exultation. He glanced at Raghu dauntlessly, smiled and winked as if he meant to say, "See, I





Dershana Nair(17)
Class XII
Assumption School
Channganacherry
Illustrations:

Sudakshina Ghosh

HEN Mr. Gomez, our class teacher. asked us to write an essay about The person you admire most. I decided to deviate from the usual "Mahatma Gandhi" or "Chacha Nehru" or "Florence Nightingale". They all were very much superior to my then young, immature mind. I know they were great and have done great things for the upliftment of human kind, but I wanted to write something different, something about someone not so famous but loving and affectionate especially to me and someone whom I knew personally and not through the big books with yellowed pages stacked in our school library.

"Grandpa"—yes, my dear old grandfather would be a more congenial subject.

It is true that with his almost fully bald head, long nose, broad-rimmed glasses and slight build he certainly wasn't an imposing figure. But he was there, always with a radiant smile and a special coconut toffee, from my earliest memory. He was an early bird and whenever I, then a-sixyear-old, stumbled out of bed rubbing my eyes vigorously to chase out "sweet sleep" who seemed to be very reluctant to leave my heavy lids, would find him in the poola-room with eyes closed in meditation and fingers fumbling over the beads of the long rudraksha mala which hung from his hand. His lips would seem to be whispering something inaudible to the human ear. He always had something personal to say to

the Almighty.

There always existed a ring of sweet smell about his person—not of perfumes or body sprays or heavily scented after shaves. It was a unique soothing smell of bhasma (sacred ash), agarbathis, sandalwood paste and camphor mingled together.

Whenever one of us, kids, fell ill, grandpa would sit beside us rudraaksha in hand and apply bhasma on our foreheads and make us swallow a bit of the same.

Occasional trips to the "Iyer's Home Cooking" restaurant were always looked forward to. Gran'ny used to have a tough time keeping under control our little restless selves whenever grandpa'a business responsibilities took him out of town. At nights we used to gather

round him to hear stories of unknown lands. Another favourite pastime was to record the little stories we used to narrate to granddpa once in a while for a change, on the big ancient record player. During summer holidays, when we used to go to our parents' place, grandpa used to while away his leisure hours listening to our recorded stories.

The horse-cart rides on Sunday mornings were really thrilling. Marrie, the ancient looking cartman used to arrive at our place at 8 o'clock

every Sunday morning and we used to go for long leisurely rides through the village roads bordered with lush green fields. Our favourite haunt was a little round pool situated on the further end of the village. It was surrounded by big rocks and trees. We used to seat ourselves beneath a big mango tree and play "who gets the booty", koodi, Pallankuzhi and many other interesting games. A late afternoon lunch at Iyer's made Sundays all the more exciting.

That was the golden

period in my childhood. Now we are all grown up but still in our heart of hearts miss the childish pleasures we used to enjoy. Grandpa is no more, and his big ancient mansion has been demolished. The village isn't the same any more, its innocent beauty has given way to the assaults of time, but memory—which is at once the greatest gift and the worst curse that has been bestowed upon man keeps painfully fresh the thoughts about the beautiful years that have gone forever.





was walking to school. The heat of the sun was killing. The unending smelly slums, the foul-mouthed and "mechanical people", insensitive to joy and pain, living on shamelessly for the sake of living, the tall concrete structures spewing out black smoke, blackening the already dull sky, filled me with an overwhelming sense of disgust towards the city.

Suddenly I was pushed aside and heard a rude voice ask, "Kya raasta tere baap ka hai (Does the road belong to your father)?"

Fighting back tears of rage and humiliation I

Srila Nayak (13)
Class X
Holy Cross High
School, Bombay
Illustrations:
Deepak Harichandan

plodded on. I was new to Bombay, new to the cold and unfeeling environment and new to the daily cruelties that life is meted out here.

My eyes involuntarily flew to a tiny figure on a stone bench a little distance from the slums. It was a small girl, hardly seven years old, dressed in rags, with a cute face and a small button nose. Her face was fringed with curly hair—matted and brown. But the most

captivating feature were her eyes—large and twinkling merrily, with a mischievous glint in them. In her arms was a big rag-doll wrapped in a yellow cloth.

Looking at her, a warm feeling coursed its way through my body and the whole of Bombay danced in front of my eyes, shrouded in a new light. I used to see her everyday. Rather my eyes used to seek her out from the sea of humanity, sometimes playing with the dog, sometimes hopping about, but most of the time on the stone bench with the rag-doll in her hands. I don't know why I was so bewitched by her. Per-

haps I felt she was the only sign of continuity in this big, bustling and fast moving city. Often I would see her burst into peals of laughter at the sight of the fat man in the cake shop waggle his finger at his poor assistant. Sometimes, she would watch on feeling a bit bewildered, a bit lost in a world that defied her young mind. A week or so of seeing me, everyday, she smiled at me and I smiled back. Thus, developed a special bond between us. Just seeing her everyday filled me with a sense of belonging in this concrete city known as Bombay.

Then there occurred the series of bomb-blasts that ripped Bombay apart. One such blast occurred near our school. Our school remained closed for a week. On the eighth day as usual I went to school. Life was slowly limping back to normal. It was the first time I admired the strong and resolute spirit of Bombay and my heart swelled with pride.

My eyes wandered to the stone bench as I walked past. I got a shock. In place of the solid cement structure was a heap of rubble—all that remained of it. Where was she? But, of course, how silly of me. She must be at home. Although many shops had been burnt down, no harm had come to the slums. Maybe she hasn't come out because her usual haunt has been destroyed. But after two days of her continuous absence, I couldn't bear it any longer. I walked towards the slums.

My friend Radhika stopped me, "Where are you going?"

I replied, "To see why that child is not coming out?"

Radhika looked at me in astonishment, "Don't you know, she was killed in the bomb-blast? She was sitting on the bench when the blast occurred."

I felt numb with shock. Tears stung my eyes. I was now crying openly not caring about the staring onlookers. Suddenly in the garbage heap I noticed an all too familiar object. I went closer. It was the rag-doll. Its yellow dress spattered with dried blood where the fingers were perhaps clutching the doll's leg. I heard the patter of feet approaching. It was a dog. It sniffed at the rag-doll and dragged it awav.

I looked on, tears glistening in my eyes, at what seemed a silent testimony of man's inhumanity to man.

Three Rupees A Day



Shailini Kolian (14)
Class VIII
Our Lady of Remedy
High School, Bombay
TESHAV wanted to

have the electronic toy gun that he had seen in the shop window very badly. "Can't you get me that gun daddy?" he asked his father, and pestered and argued till he got a hundred rupees to buy it.

That afternoon, Keshav joyfully ran down to the toy shop. In his shirt pocket was the hundred rupees. He thought of the gun with pleasure. He would show it to his friends—how they would envy him. He would be

Illustrations: Gautam Roy

the police officer who would catch the smugglers, and would shoot down threves before they could escape. 'Maybe I could take a photo of myself with the gun,' he thought. He reached the toy shop. It was closed for lunch, and would open only at three o'clock. He waited on the steps of the shop.

On the pavement was a ragged woman with two dirty looking kids. The woman looked ill. How miserable they look, thought Keshav. Two men approached the woman and her children.

One had a notebook in his hand and the other a camera. Keshav could hear what they said. The first man was interviewing the woman.

"Our daily income is not more than three rupees ... I buy a little bread for the three of us ... I am ill. I cannot work ... that's why I beg..."

Keshav could not but help over hear what the woman said.

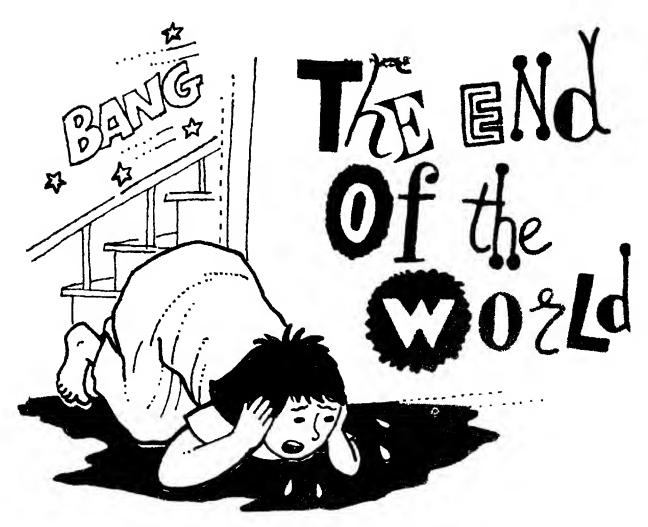
The photographer was busy clicking the woman and her children in their tattered clothes. After they had finished, the two men gave the woman five rupees and went their way.

Keshav stood watching the scene. The hundred rupees in his pocket seemed very heavy. Keshav touched it in fear.

'Our daily income is not more than three rupees...'

"Daddy give me hundred rupees for the gun..."
Keshav turned away and began to walk down the pavement. He came to a cloth shop.

Half an hour later, the surprised woman and her children found some shawls and clothes in their hands. Keshav smiled as he gave it to them. His pocket was lighter, and so was his heart.



Brinda Nair (16)
Class XII
Good Shepherd
Convent
Madras
ANG! Thud!

Dhish!!"
I jumped up, knelt
down and prayed, waiting
for the sky to fall. But
nothing happened. It was
only the door banging
upstairs. Thank God! I
heaved a sigh of relief and
settled down!

Well, to start at the beginning, it all began with an article I read last week. The article was about a monk in China claiming that the world

Illustrations: Chaitali Chatterjee

would end. At first I thought it was all hogwash just like any average teenager would. But in another magazine I read about an English scientist who confirmed what I'd read earlier. I began to wonder... Was there some sense in all this? I really wonder... Anyway these thoughts were at the back of my mind for the rest of the week.

And then 'D' day arrived. It was like any other ordinary day. The

usual rush to get to school, then go through the day like a zombie sitting in class. And then the magical tinkling of the school bell that wakes one up better than any alarm clock can.

Frankly speaking, I forgot it was 'D' day till the end of the day that is when I was in bed. And then I suddenly remembered and began praying fervently. My brother thought I'd gone wonky when I actually gave him a bear hug and begged his

pardon for all the nasty tricks I'd played on him. Anyway I lay down but never slept a wink. Visions from my past life were racing through my mind at 100 km/hr. And every time anything or anybody made a noise in the flat above I was up and on my knees praying fervently. My patti (grandmother) was mumbling her prayers and bhajans in her sleep and I imagined it was Goddess Lakshmi coming to bless me. On top of that my

brother who slept next to me, began laughing in his sleep (he always does that) and I thought it was Lord Yama coming to take me to Yamlok.

Twelve O'clock was the 'last hour'. I got up and had a midnight snack which was equal to the 'last supper' for me. I guess I overate (the way I hogged I must have eaten for my next birth as well). I fell asleep and had a nightmare of a monster chasing me round the earth, which suddenly

changed into a clock and struck twelve.

I jumped up and waited... and waited... and waited... but nothing happened. I was dumbstruck. Was it a dream? Or was it just a publicity stunt on the part of the monk and the scientist? I'll never know. But, what I do know is that I'll never believe any of that kind of nonsense 'cause now I've got oodles and oodles of some very precious knowledge called COMMON SENSE.



P. Jennifer Antony (15) Class X

Bishop Cotton Girls High School Bangalore Illustrations: Deepak Harichandan

That night I was lying in bed Trying to relax but sleep wouldn't come. So I lay there with my eyes open Staring at the twinkling stars above.

And then I saw an apparition in white Which hurried past me like a shadow. I sprang up from my bed, just in time To see that it was heading upstairs.

I followed it as quietly as I could Unfortunately I dropped a vase and it broke

Creating a noise which I feared, Might reach the midnight prowler's ears.

But the figure didn't even bother to look back.

And continued to move upstairs without being the least disturbed.

I thanked God, then felt much better,
As I had thought it would throw itself on me.

The stairs ended in a shut and bolted door. I was ready to pounce on the figure, When all of a sudden, it turned back and saw me

And its dim face glowed with anger.

Obviously irritated by my unexpected presence,
It looked at me in a threatening manner.
And my hair stood on end and my teeth chattered,
As it vanished saying, "I'll come again!"

O, the inevitable had happened.
Much to Mummy's annoyance and our delight, Daddy had brought a doggy, a small pup with melting eyes and soft brown fur. But what was this? Why were we all sitting with long faces?
None of us could come up with a name for our dog!

"Bofors," suggested my father, from behind the newspaper.

The dog whined in disagreement, "Such a horrible name for a dear doggy like me!" he seemed to say.

My younger sister looked surprised at our ignorance. "Why, Timothy is such a perfect name," she said.

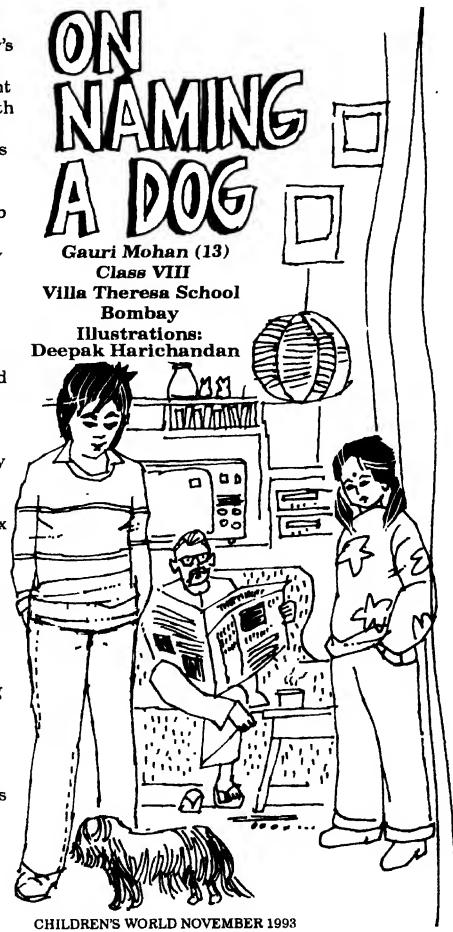
"But three out of the six girls in your 'Enid Blyton's Fans Brigade' already call their dogs by that name," I protested

It was time for Gauri, the whiz-kid, to come up with a suggestion. Something unusual, something that sounds beautiful.

"How about Duke?" I ventured.

Alas! The world is so unfair. No one appreciates these brainwaves par excellence.

Even our servant was not left behind. She seemed adamant that



Shera was the most suitable name. "Look at his fangs." She even thought our dear puppy's bark sounded like a ferocious growl.

Once she had got over the initial shock, even Mummy volleyed a thunder of suggestions. It took us ages before we could convince her that 'Jimmy' was too old-fashioned a name.

"But it is so wonderful!" she argued.

A week passed, 'our poor' doggy was having a whale of a time. He had already chewed my slippers, broken two plates and chased at least a dozen stray cats. But he remained namelass. I had almost christened him Jimmy, when out of nowhere, came Nehal.

Now Nehal is one of the few people in this world who is almost as clever as me. Normally I wouldn't agree with this, but today was different, a sort of 'do or die' situation. I narrated my woes to her.

"Call it Thums up or Custard," she said.

I was wild. "Think. And STOP WASTING TIME," I shouted

And so we sat to think, I, as usual, chewing upon my pencil (I had thought so much this week that it was almost

reduced to nothing).

Suddenly, a playful brown ball of fur rolled over me licking me with its l-o-ong tongue. "Stop," I said. "You're such a nuisance at times."

"Nuisance, you could call him that! Ha! Ha! That's a jo...." but before Nehal could finish, I jumped over her.

"Why didn't I think of it before? Nuisance, can you hear me? Stop doggy, stop," I said, running after him like a tornado.

At present, my intellectual friend is flooded with requests to supply doggy names. So next time you buy a doggy you know where to go!



Suba Vasudevan (14) Class X St. Joseph's School Bombay

Ask a poet, what is poetry,
That flows through his hands and heart.
Ask a writer, what's mystery,
That drips galore, from his pen.
Ask an artist, what is drawing,
That surges through his veins.
Ask a singer, what's music,
Those never-dying, waves of soothing
melodies.

Ask a prisoner what freedom is, He looks at the soaring birds of the morn, in envy,

Ask a student what studies are, He confronts you with a long, droopy, sullen face.

Ask a maniac, what obsession is That what starts at "phobia" and does not limit itself

even as a "mania".

Ask a beggar, what is poverty,

Words need not tell, the very sight speaks.

Ask a farmer, what "work" really is,

And his actions will speak louder than his words.

Ask a ragpicker what hunger is, That forlorn, pale, gasping face is enough to tell.

Ask a man, sick in bed, what death is, His colourless eyes, show, that yonder, it awaits him Ask anyone, rich or poor, what money is, To the needy it is godsent... a paradise...a dream To the rich, it grows on trees, it is as free as water. But to both it is a necessity, to live on earth. But ask, any of those poor or rich, What genuine happiness is... And I hear different yet, non-appeasing answers. So, I try to look back and see Where all the true smiles have faded to ...? And when was it that all the laughter died?

Rupal Ashwin Ganatra (18) Form II Agakhan Mzizima Secondary School Tanzania

The gentle pink hue glowed
Against the petals.
Creating a soft innocence.
The freshness was like that
Of a dew covered rose.
On a misty morning.
So vulnerable.
So helpless,
And yet a wild beauty
Enveloped it like,
the love of a stranger.



Ampili J. Prakash(10) Class VI Sarvodaya Vidyalaya Thiruvananthapuram

ALA was my younger cousin.
She was nine years old. She was slender with a rather unusually pink mouth. She had dark eyes that twinkled each time she was happy.

Life was happier with her around. She always gave me peace of mind and is still a spot of remembrance in me.

I first met Mala at my Granny's house. Since she was new, and I was not used to welcoming people, I ignored her. In fact, I didn't even know that she was a cousin of mine. Since she was an

Illustrations: Viky Arya

orphan, she came quite often to Granny's house, which is in the countryside.

One day, when I was tidying up my room, she came upto me and asked, "Chechi, do you like me staying here?"

"Yes," I said, somewhat surprised.

"Could you be my friend and talk to me? I feel very lonely here."

Only then did I realise, that she too was like me, an adventurous, funloving, trustworthy little girl.

From then on, we were the best of friends. Every time we met, we shared our feelings of happiness, sorrow and enthusiasm. Among these happy moments, there were a few moments of anger and sorrow. We also had quarrels and for most of them, I was to blame.

One day, Mala and I were trying to play a game of badminton. Since Mala was very inexperienced in the game, she couldn't return many of the serves made by me It was afternoon and Iwas feeling very hot and bothered. Suddenly, in a. gush of anger, I threw my racket down and said scornfully, "You are no good, Mala! You should see how others play. Just one serve of theirs will send the cork flying across the court. And you,

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"But, Chechi," Mala protested, "they are very experienced in the game. I have just started. Please forgive me, Chechi. I will

do well in the future."
"Hmph! You will!" I
scoffed and went in,

leaving Mala behind with my racket.

So, as a result of the quarrel, I did not talk to Mala during tea time. Granny, realising something was wrong, came and patted me on the shoulder.

"What happened child, to make you so silent?" she asked.

"Nothing," I said hastily, "Mala and I just had a row."

"Child, do not quarrel. It will ruin peace," Granny advised.

"But ...," I said and my eyes turned to the slowly setting sun.....

In the middle of the night, I was awakened by a slight noise in my room. I got up and switched on the old reading lamp beside my bed and looked around. Sensing nothing, I switched off the lamp and lay down.

Suddenly, instinct made me jump up and switch on the lamp and have a look at Mala's bed.

She was missing!!



Heart pounding, I got out of bed and slowly opened the front door.

It was a full moon night and a cool breeze was blowing.

I couldn't see Mala anywhere. Walking further, I reached the big river which flows near Granny's house. Granny had forbidden us from going there because the water flowed with much force and because it was very deep.

Suddenly I heard a sound. I looked around nervously. Then I saw a horrifying sight.

I saw Mala in her white nightie, her arms outstretched, walking towards the river. She was already in a precarious position. One step forward and she would fall into the river.

"Mala," I screamed and ran. When I reached the place where she was standing, I pulled her back to safety.

Her eyelids fluttered.
"Ampili," she said and
her cheeks became pink
again.

"Mala," I said as I bent down to hug her, " I will never quarrel with you again."

"All right, Chechi, let's go home," she said and stepped on to the ground. I took her hand and we trudged slowly back home.

After reaching home, we put on a fresh pair of nighties and lay down, our hearts at rest.

Next morning, we told the whole story to grandma, who gave some pills to Mala to overcome her sleep-walking.

Then, we went out to play.

After some time, I noticed that Mala's cheeks were rather puffed out. When asked, she replied, "Oh, I feel very tired. I need rest."

By late evening, that day, she developed a dry cough. Grandma thought it was just cold and told me to keep away from her in case I also caught it. But it wasn't just cold. It was something much more serious....

At night, she often got up, complaining of difficulty in breathing. Suspecting asthma, Granny called the family doctor. Hearing Mala's symptoms, his face grew grave and serious.

"It is not just cold or asthma," he said." It is tuberculosis." I felt tears pricking my eyes. I remembered the first time we met.

"Is Mala going to live?"

This was a question to which I did not have an answer.

By next morning, Mala was transferred to the hospital. By then, due to her constant coughing she even spat out blood.

Whenever I saw her, I felt like crying. Her face was always pale. Sometimes she fell unconscious, too. The doctors ordered an operation to be done. By the time of the operation, she was lifeless.

Mala was dead.

Mala's death has been a turning point for me. It helped me to understand other people's emotions and feelings better and it also taught me to be patient in my attitudes towards other people.

Today, Mala's samadhi or small memorial stone stands far from civilisation, with a few withered flowers on its. Even if I am busy, I find time to go there and place a few flowers for her.

But, it is as if Mala is there with me for ever.

ERSONALLY I don't think strong friendships can or should be broken. They are wonderful bonds that can go on and on and on. A friend is someone who cares, and will listen. They will try to help you in tough times. A friend will stand by you forever They will be careful with words, and will be responsible and helpful. They will try to cheer you up when you are sad. They will try to smooth things and will help you no matter what. A friend will not get mad at you over silly things or laugh at you if you make a mistake. Instead, they will

Malika Gujrati, (12) Richfield Middle School Ohio USA

Illustrations: B.G. Varma

try to help you understand. Friends should not be mean or cruel. They should not make sarcastic remarks about you. They shouldn't make fun of you or put you down. They shouldn't talk about you behind your back. They must not use you here and there or come to you when they need a favour. They should not make remarks or complain about the way you act, dress, or anything else

about you. A friend should not pressure you into doing something you do not want to do. They should not come to you only when they need money or help.

And most of all they must not lie to you! I have just told you about what friends should and should not be.

Every person should have a best friend. Somebody who will always be there to help you in pain and happiness. And you can always count on them being there for you. Friendship is an everlasting relationship with someone. A true friendship will never die.



Teacher: Madan what will you do when you grow up? Madan: I am going to be a policeman and follow my father's footsteps.

Teacher: So your father is

a policeman?

Madan: No, he is a bur-

glar.

Ekta Shroff (16) Class XII Adarsh Vidyalaya Madras



Chaitali Chatterjee

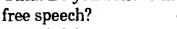
Son: Father I have taken up four courses. French, Spanish, Russian and Algebra.

Father: Good. Now let's hear you say 'good-morning in Algebra.

Uma: Do you believe in

Ravi: I do!

Uma: Good! May I use



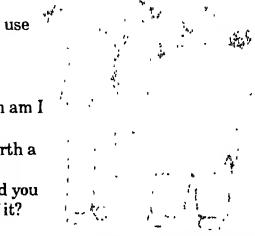
your telephone?

Prasad: How much am I worth. Mother?

Mother: You're worth a

million to me.

Prasad: Well, could you lend me a tenth of it?



Eye specialist: You need glasses.

Man: How did you know? Eye specialist: As soon as you walked through the window I knew you'd need them! +

Doctor: When my hand gets better, will I be able to play the piano? Of course.

That's great, I could never play the piano before!



Robber I: Why do you rob this house every time? Robber II: Because the board on the door of the house says "Thank you - come again'.



What stays in one place but travels all over the world? A stamp.

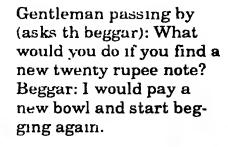


Paying Guest: My shaving water was dirty this morning.
Landlady: That wasn't your shaving water. It was your tea.



"I did not intend taking a holiday this year but the boss insisted." How long will you be on leave?"

"Until I get another job"





Palmist: You will be poor and unhappy until you are 30.

Client: After that ...
Palmist: Well, after that
you will get used to it.



Teacher: What do elephants have that no other animal has? Class: Baby elephants.

The pathetic death

Bipul Raj Ghosh (13)
Uttarapara Govt.
High School
Hooghly
Illustrations: Chaitali
HEN I was in class
III, one day I went
to school as usual
like other days. I saw a
crowd gathering at the
corner of our school
ground. I ran there to see
what the matter was! I
saw a camel sitting
with one of its legs bro-

ken. It was crying.

I heard from our school staff, that the previous night some people had brought six camels for their festival. But one escaped. It started to run away and entered our school compound. Two cruel people chased him. They could not catch the camel. But it was beaten and injured seriously by them. The two persons then fled.

That morning many people came to see the poor camel. We gave it green leaves to eat. But it kept crying in pain. We felt sorry for it. A few hours later our Headmaster called a doctor and informed Alipore zoo to take care of the camel. The doctor said that the broken leg would never mend

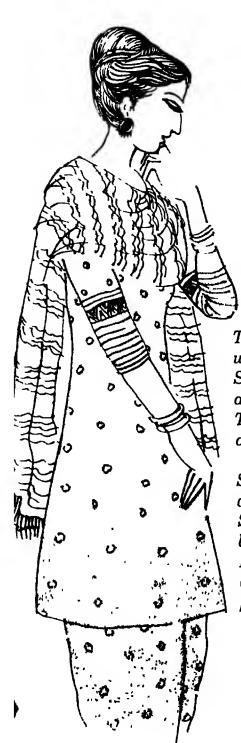
One day, I heard that the camel was in critical



condition. I went near him. He was breathing very fast. I started caressing him. After some time the camel stopped breathing and crying. He was dead. Tears rolled down my eyes.

The zoo officials came at last, but it was too late! I have seen many

deaths occur in my short life. But this incident created a deep impression in my heart and I will never forget this throughout my life.



Deepali A. Rao (15) ClassXI Jawaharlal Nehru School Bhopal

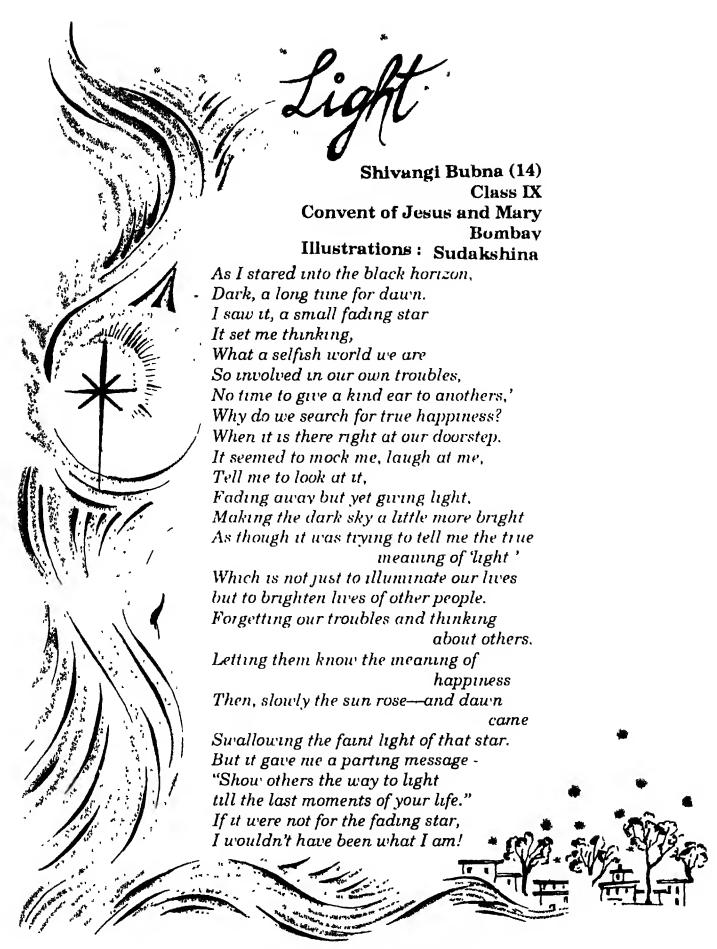
Tall and thin and fair with black hair tied into a bun She would walk in gracefully and would smile at us joyfully. Teaching us about the universe and telling us why all the planets were

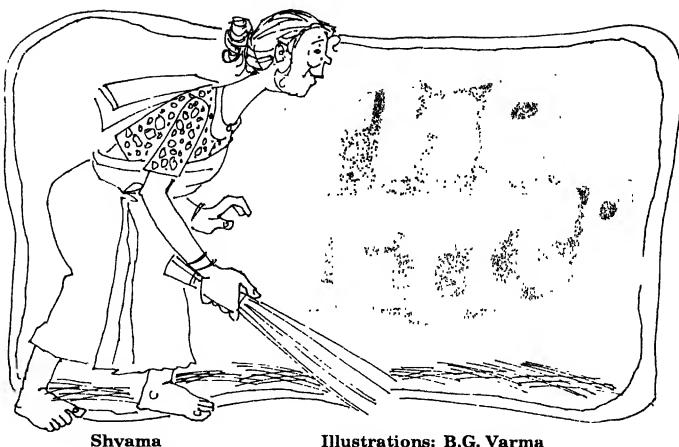
She would become one of us while playing, and a wonderful teacher while teaching. She seldom remembered our names but would never forget our pranks. I heard that she is leaving and I started weeping, for a teacher, guide and friend I will be losing:

Dear Madam, I won't stop you from going, for I know to achieve your goals you should be leaving,

I wish you best of luck in your quest, "Forget me not" is what I request.

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Shyama Narendranath(14) Class X

St. Thomas Convent Palakkad, Kerala

AM sure it will come today. You see, he must have been busy. He has to find a job... But surely it will come today." Kalyani's hopeful face glistened in the morning sun's rays.

Kalyani is our domestic help and must be at least sixty. Even though she had been working for us only for a month, her sincerity captured all our hearts. Her son had gone to Bombay two months ago. The old mother was eagerly waiting for her son's letter.

"Here comes the post-

man", I said.

Kalyani at once dropped the broom and ran to the door. Her excited face fell, when she got to know there was no letter for her.

She quietly picked up the broom and I heard her whispering to herself, "But it ought to come tomorrow."

I felt sorry for her, when I saw teardrops falling on the floor. She always talked about her son and her once happy family which was shattered by the evil hands of death. We all prayed with her to the Almighty and

waited for the valued letter.

Kalyani was ill and hadn't come to our house for two days. We all missed her and so one evening I went to her house. It was a small hut in one of the slum areas of our town. She had gone to bathe in the river. So I knocked on the door of a hut. A woman in a red sari came out. She was chewing betel leaves.

"Kalyanı...?"
I hesitated.

"Gone for a bath," she spat out the juice and continued. "She is working in your house, isn't



she?"

"Yes. How is she now?" I asked.

"Oh! well, very well. Poor thing, had fever... high fever yesterday", she replied.

"Any letters? From her son?..." I asked

"Letter?... From her

son...How can it be:..? Oh! So she has told you " also..." she laughed.

"What?" I was surprised.

"Oh!" She laughed again and spat out betel juice. "Her son is dead, she knows it. But lies to everyone and waits for a silly letter. She thinks I

don't know," she laughed again and again. I was so amazed that I couldn't say anything. I turned to go.

Kalyani was dragging herself from the river, her eyes looking at the ground. I felt pearl drops trickling down my cheeks.

Subhadra Roy (14)
Class IX
Carmel High School
Calcutta
Illustrations:
B.G. Varma

To walk the road of fire can always make one tired But, to work one's devotion, to fulfill all expectations, Is a trial of all emotions! The childhood days of carefee bliss, of pranks we played, are gone. They leave a trace like a lingering kiss, on one's mind, like a song reborn. Now, when I'm in my teens, I feel; a lack of true ambition. To take the big world in my stride, to jump all hurdles with a certain pride To face the world, never to hide, is my only emulation. The clear, blue sky, with all its beauty, calls me close, with an open hand. But, to break the shackles of my duty, is an endeavour to count the grains of sand.

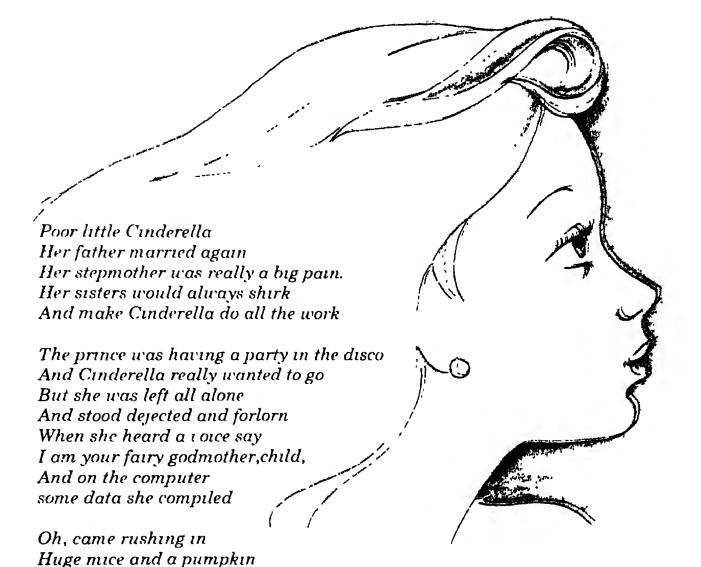
All that's gone, is gone forever,
We can never bring it back
Memories give one a satisfaction
To do a deed, a stimulation;
To succeed in it, an inspiration;
But to understand one's aspirations,
Is again an ordeal of all emotions.

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little inderella

Sarvar Abbi (16)
Class XI
Yadavindra Public School
Patiala
Illustrations: Viky Arya

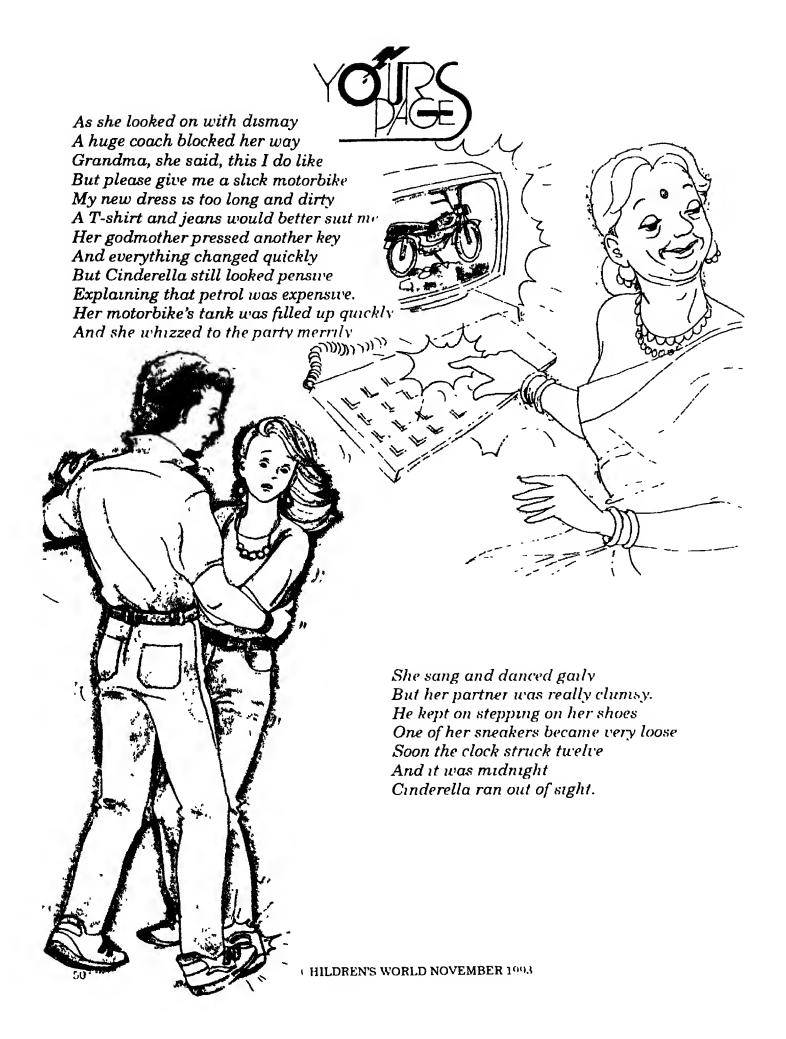




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Eeks! yelled Cinderella

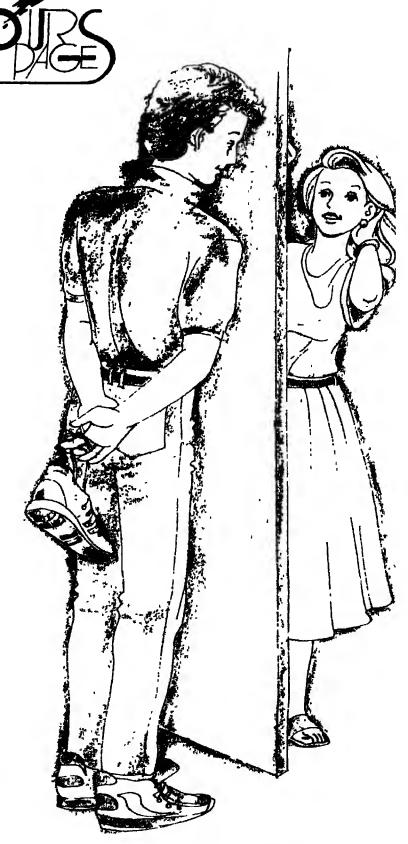
Trying to hide



The next day
A nervous young man
Knocked at the door
He was the prince—
The one whose party
She had attended before.

He held possessively
A muddy sneaker
And asked Cinderella if it fitted her.
Since it did manage to fit Cindy
The prince said cockily
How lucky you are
I am asking you to marry me

Cinderella looked at him scornfully.
I'd rather pursue my career
Than marry someone like you
I have got to do
Much more in life
Than marry someone like you
I have got to do
Much more in life
Than to be merely your wife.
And the prince sadly went away



Cinderella is a paratrooper today I would not be surprised If she lands at his house one day.

As I walked along the beach I felt a sort of affinity between the sand, the water and me Yadavindra Public School The powerful atmosphere created an almost overwhelming silence Illustrations: Viky Arya It seemed as if I was all alone In communion with my thoughts and

memories

Sarvar Abbi (16)

Class XI

Patiala

When I suddenly recognised the sound of my footsteps breaking the silence It had always blended ıntö the background before.

But today they no longer seemed meaningless

The rhythmic loud noise seemed to persistently break into my hazy thoughts questioning me, as if holding me back Yet, I could not face them at all.

They tried to reach out to a part of me Which had long since been buried A part which dared to seek the answers Now, I walked de The sound almost stifling me Now, I tried to increase my place Wanting my footsteps to mingle with the other sounds So that could forget them for trying to hold on to my conscience.





Sarvar Abbi (16)
Class XI
Yadavindra Public School
Patiala
Illustrations: Viky Arya

It is love indeed!
I would sigh, smile and blush
Since a whole month has passed by
It cannot be a mere crush
Each time he would pass by
I would turn back and sigh
I would almost faint
When he casually said, "Hi!"
Fate! we sat together for an exam
Thinking about him it was so difficult to

"Best of luck," he would say with a smile To recover from it took quite a while It seemed that the whole world was swept under my feet But I discovered he was a big cheat. "Please help me," He would say Sniffing and pleading away "I could not prepare— To fail I just cannot bear. If ne would say "Hurry up and tell me the answer to question two," I would turn red As if he had said 'Ah! how much I love you.'





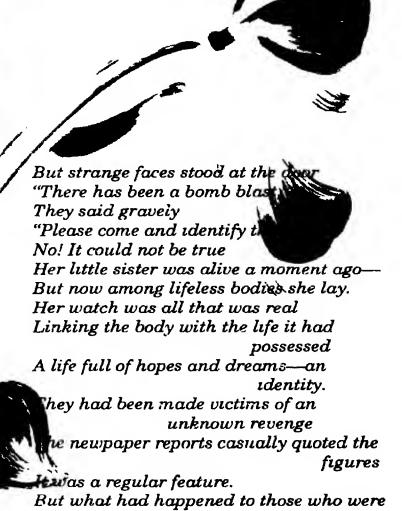
She stood helpless in disbelief
Too numb to register grief
It had been just another day
Her parents were away
"Didi do bake a cake," her
little sister had insisted
"I can go and get the
icing," she had persisted.
Promising to be careful
She had eagerly run to the market.
Feeling so grown-up and excited.
As the doorbell rang

As the doorbell rang
She shouted from inside
I have mixed the dough ages ago and you
e so late, you made me wait."

Sarvar Abbi (16)
Class XI
Yadavindra Public School
Patiala
Illustrations: Viky Arya







The world went on
Leaving them empty, bitter, paralysed
Clinging to memories
As the reality sunk in
So did the futility of life
That her little sister was lost forever in
time

left behind

The echoes of the past seem to squeeze her heart and say,

"You will never see her again."

CHILDREN'S WORLD NOVEMBER 1993



Sarvar Abbi (16)
Class XI
Yadavindra Public School
Patiala
Illustrations: Viky Arya



þ

She looked apprehensively at her teacher's frown
A timid eight-year-old
Her head nervously bent down.

"You have failed," the teacher said grimly
"Your mistakes amaze me
You would have to repeat a year."
All this seemed so hard to bear,
She went quietly back to her seat
Noticing the suppressed giggles
the sympathetic whispers
the sniggers.

She looked at the other students
Proudly receiving their marks
Beaming at the compliments
The appreciative remarks
She clenched her fists
Trying not to cry
Her personality had been judged
in terms of digits

And she wondered why.

She felt too scared to go home Feeling so helpless and alone She got the scolding She dreaded "You dumb stupid kid The only failure Aren't you ashamed Because of you we would be blamed."

"No more painting," they said angrily "It has wasted all your time A set of tuitions would be fine." Suddenly her days seemed so drab and empty Piled with loads and loads of work They seemed to stretch endlessly And she was firmly warned not to shirk. And meaningless facts and figures she tried to cram

To prepare for the next exam.





He noticed the paintings As they carelessly lay "Oh! to the places these could be sent Your child really has talent." They told her to paint again But failed to understand her helpless pain For her mind which had longed to be free Had been chained by monotony Losing all its spontaniety, its creativity.

Lost innocence

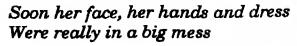
Sarvar Abbi (16)
Class XI
Yadavindra Public School
Patiala
Illustrations: Viky Arya

Standing in an ice-cream parlour one day I was distractedly biting into a fudge sundae A friend had been rather rude So I was really in a bad mood Suddenly I saw a tiny child peeping in Urgently tugging at her mother's arm In an eager persistent way.

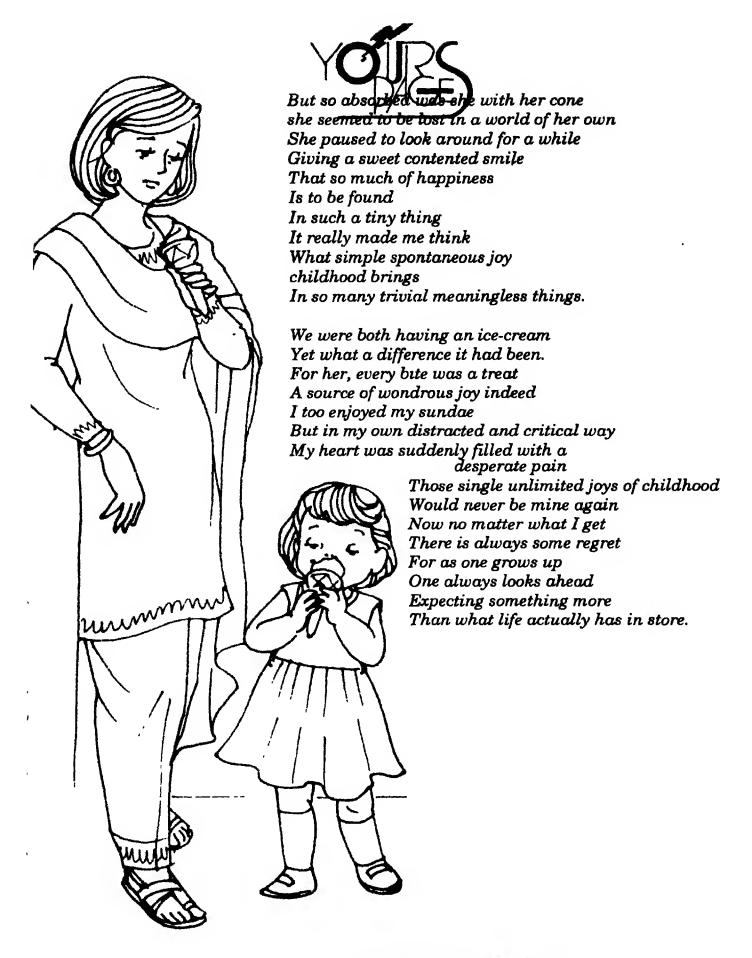
She kept on pointing towards my sundae
The child kept on pleading again and again
Her beseeching hungry eyes
A desperate blend
of longing and pain.

Soon I saw her rush inside walking towards the counter with pride.

Demanding in an important tone
A chocolate ice-cream cone
She grabbed her cone excitedly
And started slurping and licking it eagerly
So busy was she in tucking in
She hardly noticed the ice-cream
dripping down her chin.







The Super Spy

oTH were pertect in their professions. One was a top class spy. The other was a notorious criminal.

The other one, who was a smuggler, was not only engaged in smuggling activities in South Africa and India but was often employed to do away with top political leaders. He was a master at it and was never afraid or nervous while committing a crime.

His method of hiding smuggled goods was also superb. No one knew how he did it or where he hid the stuff. His name was Pesi Jackson and he was a German.

On the other hand, the spy was also excellent at his job. He was an Indian going by the name of Abhinav Bhaskar. He had taken this job about a year and a half ago, but he had already solved several crimes.

When Pesi's crime rose to its zenith, the South African police informed the Indian Bureau of Investigation to help, as Pesi smuggled goods to India.

In his office, Abhi was rejoicing over his success of solving a case which he thought had been the most dangerous one in his Dimple Vivek (14)
Class X
Bal Bharti Public
School

Illustrations: Gautam Roy



life, when Mr. Basu—his boss called him. Mr. Basu had been kind and encouraging throughout his seventeen months of spying. There, he was giving the task of nabbing Pesi with sufficient proof.

Abhinav began his work immediately. The first thing he did was to have at his command, twenty-three armed policemen who were to follow his orders without question. Then he asked the Customs officers to be extra alert. He also asked

the SAP (South African Police) to check every shipment and every item of luggage which was to be sent to India.

Three days passed.
Unfortunately, Abhinav hadn't thought of gathering proof against Pesi just yet, maybe he was overconfident. All detectives might face this situation some time in their lives. Abhi was going to face it now.

As Pesi entered the customs, Abhi, waiting for him screamed, "Surren-

der..., didn't you hear what I said, Mister? Surrender."

"No need for all this, young chap. Well my name is Allan Courter and I am no relative of either you or that fellow you are after," Pesi said calmly.

But Abhi was not one to be discouraged so easily. He wanted to check the baggage. Mr. Allan alias Pesi, allowed him to do so.

Abhi began his work. While checking the baggage, his eyes went to Pesi's front pocket where he saw two shining pens unusually broad. However, Abhi ignored them and completed his work. He did not find anything at all.

Meanwhile, the SAP confirmed that Pesi had managed to smuggle diamonds worth at least \$5,000,000. When Abhi

was informed about his, he cursed himself for ignoring those pens. The diamonds had to be hidden in their broad ends. He felt frustrated and very annoyed with himself.

Along with the news of the diamonds, the SAP also informed him that Pesi was due to return to Germany on July 15, which wasn't very far off. Abhi didn't want to lose his chance this time.

But strangely enough, he gave orders which made it seem that he was going to lose the chance.

He asked all the officers to return to their offices. The whole IBI was surprised. He only told his chief about his plan of action.

He went home and slept soundly. The next day he was to meet Mr. Basu, his boss. He woke up early.

'A busy day', he thought. But Abhi felt uneasy for some reason.

The phone rang, his uneasiness increased as he picked up the receiver. He heard the voice and stood still. Tears came to his eyes. Mr. Basu had been shot dead!

Mr. Basu's death remained a mystery. The event had taken place at 9 a.m. on the ninth of July.

Abhi suspected Pesi's hand in this but he didn't tell anyone about it. He immediately started his plan of action. He had all the lines going to the hotel tapped. Then he himself began to spy on Pesi. He took his special camera with him.

It was July 19, and nothing had happened yet. In the morning, Abhi was resting near the hotel's swimming pool, when he saw Pesi. He







Pesi shouted at him, "Well, what are you doing here? Again at the wrong place and after the wrong man."

"Well, Mr. Allan, why are you bothered about me? I'm enjoying a holiday and I don't want to waste it talking to you, goodbye."

Pesi smiled and went away Abhi followed him to his room. There, Pesi telephoned someone and told him that he wanted the diamond rings as soon as possible as he wanted to leave India immediately. He said, "I know, they are clever but do you realise who they are dealing with? I'm going to Germany tonight. Shall meet you at 7 p.m."

Abhi rushed to his office. He issued a warrant against Pesi and for the first time, he admitted Pesi's cleverness was foolproof. Then he went back to the hotel where he hid in the balcony.

At eight o'clock sharp, someone knocked at the door. A midget in a black dress and bright-coloured tie, entered. He had a briefcase in one hand. He opened it. Diamonds sparkled. Gold glittered. Abhi admired the beauty of these jewels for a long time. Then he remembered that he had to take photographs too.

Snap...snap...snap.
There, the photographs
were taken. Abhi emerged
from his hiding place. He
rested for a while.

Then he returned to his



hiding place. He was in time to hear Pesi talking to one of his friends. He was going back to Germany and two men were to go with him to be on the safe side. He was to board the last flight that day. Abhi rushed to the airport from where he came to know that the last flight was to leave at 2 a.m.

'Only four hours are left,' he thought. He booked two tickets for the flight. It was already 11.30 p.m. when he returned to his office.

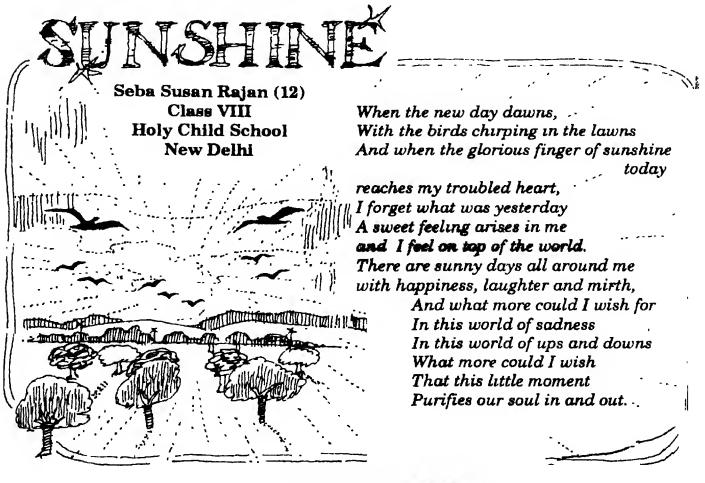
Then he a ked two colleagues to go to Germany and nab the other members of Pesi's group.

Abhi took a revolver for himself and went to the airport. He reached at 1.30 a.m. along with his two friends and five armed policeman in civilian dress. He looked around to see whether everyone was in his place.

A little later, a shout full of joy was heard. Pesi along with fake passports and jewels worth \$120,000 was arrested. He later confessed that he had murdered Mr. Basu to create pressure on the I.B.I. He was later sentenced to death.

Thus Mr. Basu's sacrifice and the hard work done by Abhinav had borne sweet fruit.

Later Abhi's two colleagues reported that Jackson's entire group in Germany had been caught which doubled Abhi's happiness. Indeed this was his greatest achievement.





stating "Dear Mom and Dad, you know Maths has always been my weak point. Unfortunately, I have flopped again. I hope to improve by the time my next report is due. So, don't worry."

The above method may have a reverse effect sometimes. So it is better to try the second method.

G. Madhavi (14) Class IX Bhadrachalam Public School Khamman Dist.

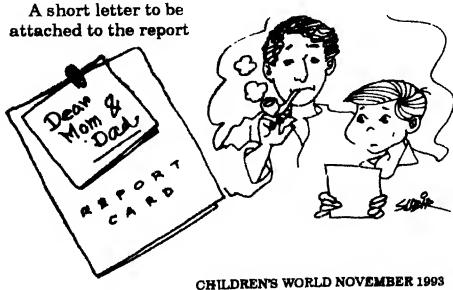
method: Take your report to your dad after dinner or mood and say with a

T is a painful and nervewracking job to show a bad report to one's parents. What can be done to make the parental storm of disapproval a little less violent? Here are a few ideas.

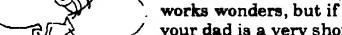
when he is in a pleasant concerned look on your face. "Mom hasn't seen my report yet. I really don't know how to tell her that I am at bottom in Maths again. Tell me

The confidential

The disarming method:



quickly (from outside of course) and disappear for an hour or two.

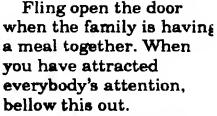


your dad is a very shorttempered man, then here comes the last and final method which works at all times and seasons.

what to say to her, Dad."

This method usually





"Here is my Report. I have failed in four subjects!"

The effect of this piece of news will be quite shattering. But before anyone can say a word, you laugh (one of those stereotyped movie laughs) loudly and yell again, "Ah! ha! fooled you. I have really failed in two." Then close the door



HE time for which I was eagerly waiting dawned at last. The celebrations of the long-awaited festival, Durga Puja had started. Filled with anticipation, I was dreaming of all the gifts I would get.

I am very fond of dresses and that is why Ma constantly complained to father that since I had plenty of clothes, I was becoming more fussy. I had regular fights with Ma over my dresses in the evening, and so was always late if I had to go somewhere or if a friend came over to play. If there was a birthday party in the colony, I always wanted a new dress to wear to the party.

Pranali Goswami (12)
Class VI
Don Bosco High
School, Jorhat
Illustrations:
Deepak Harichandan

This year, for *Puja* Ma gave me three new frocks and my *Mahi* (aunt) gave me one skirt and a frock. I was delighted! I was constantly imagining which skirt or frock I would wear on which day of *Puja*.

My companions and classmates Sunanda, Rianka, Sunita, Sukanya, Parijat, Sudha, Nitu, Gitima and all my friends showed me the presents they had re-

ceived and I showed mine.

The next day, early in the morning we prepared to go to the temple. I wanted to wear the frock with red flowers and white frills which I had selected myself. But Ma objected.

Ma's opinion was,
"Milli, wear it in the
evening. If you wear it
now it may become dirty.
And after all, it's a short
walk from here to the
temple and no one will
notice your frock. Now, go
and wear another one."

But, what's the use?
After all, I was also stubborn and was getting sullen. Ma explained to me why I shouldn't wear that particular frock and told me to be sensible.

But, my anger did not die down. However, I knew that no argument or reasoning will work with Ma and I had to oblige reluctantly.

We lit the lamps and offered flowers and coconut to Goddess Durga. The pandit put tikkas on our foreheads. I was very excited. I always loved to visit the temple especially, because it was pleasing to hear the ringing of the bells. We gave the anjal; and returned home. At home I was still sullen over the frock and would not talk to Ma. I refused to have breakfast.

There was a small and timid knock on the door and someone uttered "Baideo" (elder sister) and Dalimi Bai came inside and stood near the doo Ma came out and asked, "What happened Dalimi"?

"I brought the girl. Baideo, that day you gave a frock to give her as a gift for Puja. After wearing it she is not able to wait or show any patience. She kept telling me that first she would show the dress to Milli and then only watch Puja," answered Dalimi Bai.

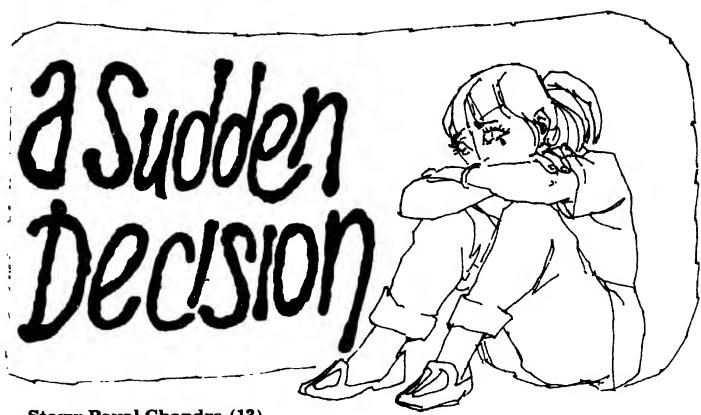
Dalimi works as a parttime maid in our house. A
few years ago her son had
died because of lack of
proper treatment. And
from that time Dalimi Bai
worked in our house. A
short time afterwards she
had adopted a girl and
treated her as a daughter.
The girl, Maya, had been

orphaned when she was a baby. Dalimi took her from the hospital. Now, Maya is almost the same height as me. I went outside to hear what Ma was telling Dalimi Bai. There I saw holding on to Dalimi Bai's hand and clutching the pallu of her sari was Maya. She was wearing my old red frock, which I had already stopped wearing as it was torn. Dalimi Bai had stitched the torn portions. The white thread could be seen sticking out through the patched parts.

Putting a finger in her mouth Maya slowly lifted her dark, black eyes and stared at me. I smiled at her and her eyes seemed to say, "Didi, I am looking pretty, aren't I"?

I was not able to hold back my tears!





Story: Payal Chandra (13)

Class IX
New Era Public School
New Delhi
Illustrations:
B.G. Varma

HERE was a lot of hustle and bustle in Modern Girls' School. All the parents had been called upon to attend the parent-teachers' meeting. Sheena's mother had taken halfday's holiday from her office and had arrived on time. Everyone was excited and happy except Sheena, who was lost in her thoughts. She was missing her father immensely. He had left the house nine years ago when Sheena was a small kid.

When she came back from school after the meeting, she collected her wits and asked her mother, "Mummy, where is Daddy? Does he not love me?"

"He is dead," replied her mother Reena, sobbing.

"You are lying, Ma, that day I overheard you telling grandma that Dad's alive. Then why have you been lying, why? Mummy, why?" she yelled and rushed to her room.

Reena had no reply, in fact she did not want to tell Sheena the truth. But she felt light as if a great burden had been lifted from her heart. After that outburst this topic was never started again in the

house. The old naughty Sheena had turned into a quiet, calm one.

Every thing went smoothly, until one day Sheena came across an old, battered diary while searching for her Mathematics book. She ran downstairs and cleaned the diary of all the dust and webs on it. Gradually, she started turning the pages. The diary belonged to her father, Mr. Deepak Malhotra. When she read the fourth page of the diary, she was astonished. Her father had scribbled--Today, I am getting married but I am not happy as I do not want to get entangled in any sort of shackles. I want to lead a carefree

life. But my father is a heart patient and I do not want to defy him as one more heart attack can lead to his death! I am helpless. I hope God would excuse me.'

As Sheena turned some more pages, she read: 'I am very happy today. A beautiful and sweet daughter has arrived in this world and I intend providing her with all sorts of luxuries and happiness. Her birth has brought mirth and delight in this lonely and barren life of mine. May God bless her!'

Tears started rolling down Sheena's eyes and she wondered at her affectionate father. A little further was written: 'I cannot bear it any more, these fights everyday have made my life unendurable. Now I cannot live in this house. I just cannot! Sheena, my loving daughter, please excuse your unfortunate father!'

Sheena was sobbing.
Now she badly wanted to see her father, who adored her more than anything else in the world. She started searching for her father's address and found something scribbled in a very bad handwriting on the



"Loving daughter,"
when you read this, you
would probably have
grown up into a big girl. I
know you are furious with
me but I do hope you will
forgive me after reading
the diary and give me a
chance to answer all your
queries and clarify all
your doubts. If you come
to see me before I close
my eyes, I would die in

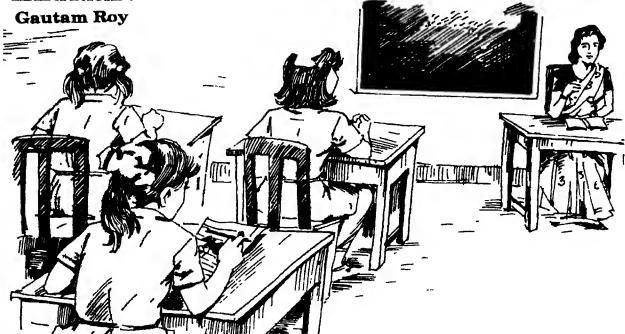
peace. Here is my address. I will be waiting for you till the last breath of my life.'

Sheena started crying. Then suddenly she wiped her tears. She had made a decision. Perhaps the first of its sort in life which meant a lot to her. She had decided to spend her summer vacations with her father and bring him back with her.



WINSUNDER MENT

Rashmi Sharma (15) Illustrations:



AAWNNNN...! BORING!! 1:23. History period. Twenty five minutes to go. Electricity cut off as usual. I sighed as the teacher droned on and on about the British Rai and East India Company. 1 began doodling on the piece of paper in front of me. A horse began to take shape—it looked more like a dog... I continued anyway... a soldier riding the dog... a horse. A bullet comes whizzing through the air... it hits the horse. it falls down... my eyes began closing... my head started nodding. Suddenly, the horse got up. I gasped. It neighed at its

master, who was groaning. The horse looked at
me hopefully and I
extended my finger, with
the help of which the
rider got up painfully.

"T-Thank you," he muttered.

"W-who are you?" asked

a shaken me.

"I-I am a soldier.. as you can see. I am trying to get away... you see I was a prisoner of the Britishers. I managed to escape, but there hot on my heels... I got shot.. .ugghh.. it hurts!



CHILDREN'S WORLD NOVEMBER 1993

This couldn't be happening. No. I'm imagining it. It can't be true.. It simply can't...

Another horse with a soldier came galloping into sight.

"Aggrr..." cried the injured soldier, "save me!"

The other man got out a gun and began shooting.

The injured one ran helter skelter. He came rushing towards me.

The other one took aim and pressed the trigger.
The bullet came whis-

tling, cutting through the air, right into my arm. I shrieked and my eyes jerked open.

I looked around wildly. It was my friend who had poked me with her pencil because the teacher was headed this way. I slammed my notebook shut just in time so she couldn't see the doodling.

"What's this? Why's your notebook closed? Why aren't you doing the work I gave?"

"Uh... the wind was blowing and it blew the notebook shut."

"Are you sure? There is no wind."

"Uh..."

TRRINNNGG!! The bell rang.

"Saved," I breathed thanking my lucky stars. Of course, it had all been a dream. As I began putting my notebook inside my bag, I heard a scream and the sound of galloping. I quickly opened it and caught a glimpse of a hoof racing away. Had it been just a dream or...?





C.N.Sree Jith (16)
Class XI
Jamia Hassania
Public School
Aluva
Illustrations:

Sudakshina Ghosh

S soon as the movie was over, I, along with a lot of other people, moved towards the parking lot. I looked at my watch. Half past two only. Plenty of time to spend.

"Puu...wuu...," a car driver was getting annoyed because my bike was blocking his way. With an apologetic look, I started my bike and soon was on the streets. A girl selling bangles attracted my attention and I stopped. Carelessly dressed, she was about ten years old.

"Chudi chahiye saab?" I found her asking me.

A thought flashed in my mind. If I buy some bangles for Renju, my sister, she'd be happy and I could do some good to this poor little girl too.

"Haan," I answered. She kept the basket of bangles on the ground and displayed them.

"Give me those red ones, the ones with golden lines, I'll take a dozen of them," I took them from her and looked carefully. Not that strong, but they were enough to keep a girl of ten happy.

"Teen rupya, saab," she said.

I handed her a five rupee note and when she was about to give the balance, I said, "Keep it."

"Shukriya, Saab," she smiled thankfully and departed. As I turned backwards to look at a car, a new model, the bangles fell from my lap to the road. I didn't have enough time to bend down and take it. Before that a truck passed, grinding them to powder. I looked, at the powdered bangles for a minute. Then I thought, 'After all, only three rupees gone.' Then I gently corrected myself, 'No, no, five rupees.' But I still felt it was not much

of a loss; the bangles were cheap even at five rupees.

I looked for the bangleseller. She was nowhere to be found. I sighed, and started my motorbike. While speeding through a junction, I noticed the bangle-seller, trying to cross the road. And before my very eyes a speeding jeep knocked her down. She fell and a bus ground her to pulp. I looked at her basket lying near the pavement. The bangles that had fallen out of it were being picked up by passers-by.

I once again glanced at the bangle-seller, sorry, dead body of the girl. Now all vehicles were moving through the other edge of the road, as though to avoid her. Where was the jeep? It was nowhere to be found.

'How cheap was her life? Just like the bangles she sold!' I thought sorrowfully.



THE STARS

Vikram Singh (15)
Class X
D.A.V.School
New Delhi
Illustrations:
Sudakshina Ghosh

When I look at the sky, full of stars, I really wonder, what they are. Some say they are the souls of people who were great,

An astrologer believes them to affect everyone's fate.

For a mother, they are like her baby's eyes, Scientists claim them to be balls of fire of huge size.

A poet writes of them as shimmering pearls embedded in a black sea

They serve as a natural compass to the sailors at sea.

Well, they mean different things to different people,

I merely say that without them, I wouldn't have written this poem

CHILDREN'S WORLD NOVEMBER 1998



R. Janani (16) Class XII Vikaasa School Madurai Illustrations: Subir Roy

HERE are you from?" I asked the passenger sitting next to me.

"Neptune!" she replied as she tidied her long green hair with two hands, while she held a travel brochure about places of interest on Earth with her third.

"I have always visited only planets like Pluto or Uranus for my holidays. This is the first time I made it to Mars. From there, I decided to extend my trip and visit Earth too!"

"Mars on the whole was very nice. You see this is the first time I visited Mars; and this is the first time I am going to Earth!" I told her.

"Dear me! You aren't from Earth then? You look exactly like an earthling!" my companion exclaimed in surprise.

"No! I am from Scisyhp!" I said.

"You mean you have come all the way from Akra galaxy!" she exclaimed.

"Yes! We Scisyhpians resemble Earthlings a lot, because, the conditions resemble those of Earth. The distance from the Sun to the Earth is almost equal to the distance, between our planet Scisyhp and its star Erif. But, there are differences you know! For instance, we at Scisyhp are trying,

unsuccessfully to cultivate a tree. Before launching our next attempt, our chief sent us, or rather me, to observe the conditions of growth, essential for the cultivation of a tree. That is why I am going to Earth!"

The spaceship's captain's voice caught our attention.

"Your attention please! We will be entering Earth's atmospheric field any moment now! Please fasten your seat belts." The captain went on to tell us about the time scheme on Earth; and the gravitational force on Earth. We accordingly adjusted our inter-stellar watches and gravi-suits.

"Year AD 3351. The



time here is 12.00 noon. We are about to land now." The captain's voice crackled over the speaker. The spaceship landed with a great roar in the landing area. The engine gradually stopped purring and we stepped out one by one.

After departing from the space station, both, my companion from Neptune, and I, hailed a jet mobile and asked the driver to drop us at a reliable hotel. He dropped us at Hotel Astro which was well equipped with many facilities for interplanetary travellers like us.

The next day, we decided to go on a tour around North America.

There was nothing special to be seen anyway; except the tall grey steely skyscrapers, against an equally grey smoky sky. It could not be denied that earthlings had progressed a lot in science, but I felt something lacking.

In South America the next day, though I found the continuous deserts and rock caves amidst the highly modern cities picturesque, the scene lacked a certain completeness.

The next day saw us sampling Eurasia. We went to innumerable museums and learnt a lot about planet Earth. About 1500 years ago, Earth's trees had almost

all been denuded, because of extensive deforestation. The only trees left were in a tiny island in a corner of Asia, inhabited by supposedly primitive people.

All this information shocked me. Here we were at Scisyhp trying to grow a tree, while the Earthlings had thoughtlessly destroyed their natural wealth.

Though we had seen many pictures, sketches and remains of trees, we still did not have a clear idea of what a tree looked like. So when we visited the isle of trees the next day, we were curious and excited. When we walked through the forest, my heart was filled with a great peace. Suddenly a

host of small winged beings burst into song. On asking the guide, I learnt that these were called birds. Tailed beings jumped from tree to tree playfully. These were monkeys. There were so many creatures. The island was teeming with life. Some trees had colourful looking objects hanging from it. Our guide plucked a golden object from a tree and asked us to taste it. It was wonderful This I learnt was called a fruit. In these peaceful surroundings, I experienced joy. On talking with the simple inhabitants of the island, I learnt a lot. Though the people were simple, they were friendly. They worshipped the forest and revered it. What a contrast they presented to the so called civilised people! It was with very great sorrow that they told us that this beautiful forest was about to be destroyed soon; as the government had planned to introduce civilisation. This shocked us.

Even after such perverse effects on the environment, due to deforestation, even after such scientific progress, had man not realised his folly in destroying trees? Had his stupidity not ended even in this modern technological age? Did civilisation mean just the building of more skyscrapers? Or did it mean the making of more hot, awful. deserts? Had he not bothered to discover the scientific aspects of nature? Had he not realised that by destroying trees, he was ultimately destroying himself? Had he not realised that true civilisation was to live and let live?

The Neptunian woman, was so depressed by all this, that she left Earth

by the next inter-planetary flight. I remained on the island, wondering at the beauty present there. I stood silently watching the 600-year-old banyan tree, admiring the blue, blue, sky. I could not help wondering about the irony of things.

Yes! I had made up my mind. What did it matter that I was from another planet? I was going to save this beautiful planet from total destruction. I had to' I was going to start civilisation in the rest of the world. A civilisation which enabled people to coexist in harmony with nature. It would be the best of its kind, and other planet-' inhabitants would be envious of Earth. I knew my decision now. I knew that, the day when the Earth would be greener, and the day when the skies would resound with the chirping of birds, was not far away.





The Revenue of the Tail-ventue of the Tail-ventue of the Tricket

Text: Vivekananda Mandal (13)

Illustrations: B.G. Varma



THE BIRDS WERE NOT SCARED. ANGRY, BUDHUR BAP SHOOK A

IF EVER I CATCH YOU,
I'LL GIVE YOU SUCH A CRACKSMACK - THRASH, YOU'LL
REMEMBER IT ALL YOUR
LIFE!

...

ONE NIGHT, A TIGER ENTERED
BUDHUR BAP'S FIELD-HE CONTINUED
TO SLEEP WHEN THE SUN ROSE.
BUDHUR BAP CAME TO THE FIELD
AND FOUND THE BIRDS PECKING
AT THE RICE.



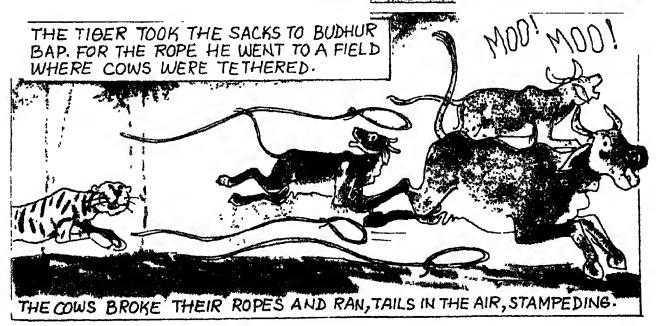




IT WAS A MARKET DAY IN THE VILLAGE. THE TIGER WAITED BEHIND A BUSH ON THE ROAD TO THE MARKET. THREE RICE DEALERS CAME ALONG, CARRYING RICE IN LARGE SACKS.











THINKING HIM DEAD, BUDHUR BAP OPENED THE SACK.





BUDHUR BAP HEARD THE TIGER.

DEAR

LR IS ALNE HE'LL

KILL ME, FOR SURE . I'LL

LOCK MYSELF INTO MY

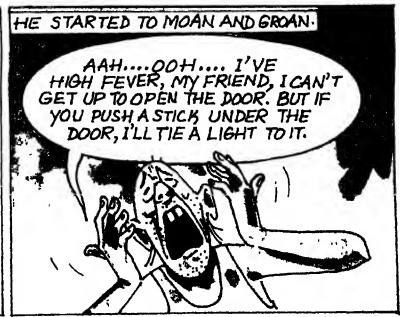
HOUSE AND SHUT ALL

THE WINDOWS.

THE TIGER WENT ROUND THE HOUSE, LOOKING FOR A WAY IN.









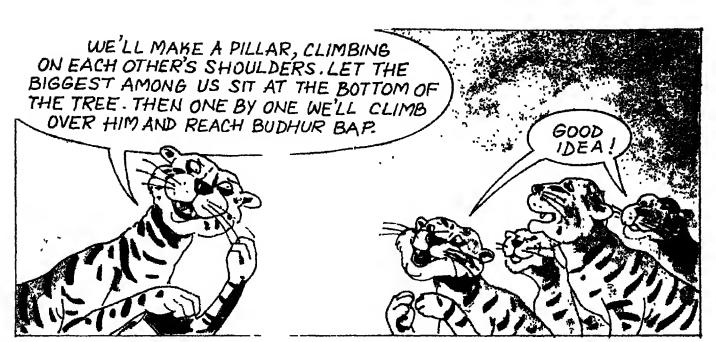








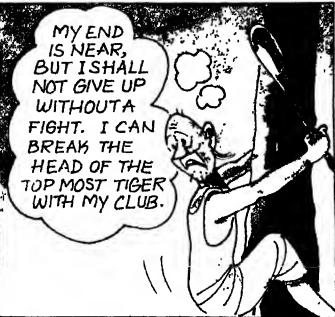




THE BIGGEST TIGER WAS THE TAIL-LESS ONE. HIS WOUND HAD NOT HEALED BUT HE SAT AT THE BOTTOM OF THE TREE WITH THE STUMP OF HIS TAIL RESTING IN A HOLE THE OTHER TIGERS CLIMBED UP ONE BY ONE.



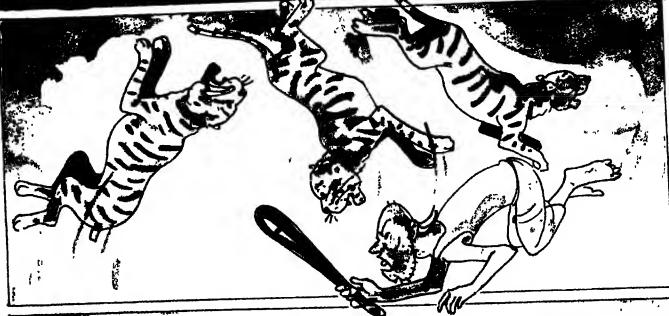




BUT BELOW, THE HOLE IN WHICH THE TAIL-LESS TIGER HAD PUSHED HIS STUMP, BELONGED TO A LAND-CRAB.











A. Shyam Narayan Rao (14) Class X FACT Township High School. Cochin

Illustrations: B.G. Varma

IVE more minutes, students," yelled the teacher. Everyone began to collect their papers, pin and revise them, all at one go. At last the final bell rang and hurriedly the teacher collected the answer sheets. We, with joyous shouts of "Hurrah, Exams see you next year", "Holidays, here we come", trooped out of the examination hall.

That night my father said to me, "Instead of lazing around why don't you take part in some worthwhile activity? Our officers' club is organising a bicycle race shortly, why don't you take part in it?"

I was shocked, for as far as I was concerned, my bicycle had been a major cause of irritation to me. My uncle had given it to me, having found it of no use to his children. It was an old bicycle and even my uncle did not know what model it was. However, it was a sturdy one even though its pedal

was broken, spokes
twisted, seat torn, half of
the rear mudguard shapeless and body rusted. It
had no headlight even
though it had a dynamo.
My father was always
dead against taking the
bicycle to the nearby cycle



repair shop as he felt that the mechanic would charge a good lot for its repairs and cheat us. So I had to repair most of the damages with the tools borrowed from our good neighbour. It was still a trouble to ride. I had repeatedly asked my father to buy me a new one.

On hearing this he would say, "Can't you walk to your school? Walking is a good exercise. I used to walk six km to my school when I was much younger than you..."

Then I would leave that place knowing there was no hope of getting a new bicycle. My mother, however, sympathised with me and constantly argued in my favour, at times nagging my father.

He would tell her, "You don't know the value of money—Goddess
Lakshmi. Only people who earn it the hard way, know its value." Then in a huff he would leave the place.

I always felt that he never understood the change of times from his childhood days to my days in school.

My thoughts ceased to roam and returned to the present.

My father again repeated the question, "Will you take part in the cycle race?"

I wanted to say no, because my friends, seeing my Mughal period contraption, would make fun of me. But something in my father's tone made me say 'YES'. I regretted my answer no sooner and wanted to change. I tried to say 'No', but his hard stare dispelled any second thought that might have been lingering in my mind.

The next day I told my mother of my foolish commitment—to participate in the cycle race. I sought her help to cancel my consent. I told her how humiliating it would be if I went for a cycle race with my old and rusted one. I asked her to pester my father to buy me a new cycle at least on this occasion. She appealed to my father. But the only word we could get out of him was "Let me consider it."

Mother and I did not know when exactly this would materialise.

Then, D-day arrived. At the starting point my friends were ready with their glimmering bicycles, BSA SLR, HERO, STREET HAWK and so on. The competitors looked haughtily at my cycle and passed mocking comments. The whistle blew and the twenty km race began. My friends on their latest cycles were far away in minutes. They became tiny objects and vanished from my vision.

I grimly pedalled. At the half-way mark a friendly guide told me 'The last of them has already left thirty minutes back and you better hurry up.'

I visualised my friends laughing their heads off and I thought of giving up. But something within me prevented me again, from doing so. I grimly held on to the handlebar and rode as fast as I could. Thirty minutes after the others had reached the finishing line I pushed my way there. There was no applause or encouraging words. In fact there was hardly any crowd as none expected any more competitors. The few that were there gave me a thunderous boung. From the corner of my eye I looked at them. I was relieved to know that none of them were known to me.

Utterly exhausted and dejected but with a tinge

of unaccountable pride and self-pity, I finished the race. I made my way to the soft drink stall and had lime juice. The secretary of the organising committee announced the first prize to Navaneeth who rode Street Hawk. There was a pause among the crowd followed by an ear-shattering applause. As the applause died down, the second prize was announced. It went to David, a tall boy of our school. There was applause once again. My close friend Rahım got the third prize. I joined the

others in the mond cheering and clapping.

The children were vacating their seats and parents were getting up. The announcer requested everyone to take their seats for a while. He said "This year we are giving a special prize for the most enduring cyclist and this prize goes to Shyam Narayan."

Surprised and dazed I went to the podium to receive the prize from the chief guest. I saw many eyes envying me and some said, "A lucky boy."

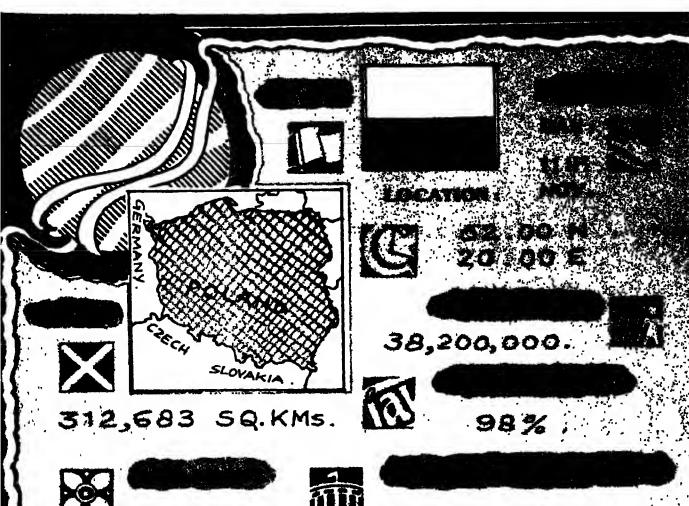
I experienced an unbounded happiness when the crowd clapped as I went to receive the prize.

I hurriedly made my way home, eager to meet my mother. "Amma Amma." I was shouting at the top of my voice as I entered the house.

My sister who was standing in the verandah told me that father and mother were in the car shed. I rushed there. I was shocked to see a brand new cycle near my father.

"Oh, Papa," I cried and hugged him.









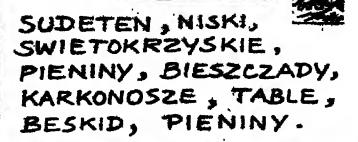
PARLIAMENTARY REPUBLIC.



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CHEMICALS MACHINERY & EQUIPMENTS COAL, INDUSTRIA PRODUCTS:











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EOFFER MATURAL GAS

THE BURRED REASURE

Text O.P. Bhagat

Illustrations: B.G. Varma

lord was once pleased with a peasant. He gave him a piece of land on which he could grow what he liked.

One day, while he was digging in his field, the peasant came upon a buried jar. To his joy, he found it full of gold coins

The metal jar, had two handles. It was too heavy for the peasant to lift on his own. But if there was another person to help him, the two could easily carry it up.

The peasant covered the jar with loose earth. He wondered whom to call for help.

He had no doubt that anyone he asked would lend him a helping hand. But there was a risk in it. The man would tell others about the gold and the news would, sooner or later, reach the lord.

"Once it reaches him," the peasant said to himself, "the lord will take all



the gold from me. He may even take back the land he gifted to me."

Safest was to ask his wife to help him. If he thought of her last, there was reason for it.

The woman was stupid and talkative. She gossiped with the village women all day. She told them of everything that (happened at home. She would tell them about the jar of gold coins.

If he took care, thought the man, her blabbing would do him no harm

He went to the market and bought lots of sausages and small rolls of white bread, and also a fish and a bird

From there he went to his field. It was getting dark and nobody was around. He hung the sausages on the hedge and scattered the bread rolls near it.

After that he put the bird in the fish net and the fish in the snare he used to set for birds.

It was quite late when the peasant went back home. As he expected, his wife started grumbling that there was not much to cook for supper.

"Let us go and look in our net and snare," said the peasant. "With luck we may find something there."



His wife got up. The peasant led her towards the field. The woman stopped by the hedge. "Aren't these sausages?" she said. She plucked one and tasted it. "It is a sausage, indeed."

Then she looked at the ground. "Are these stones or bread rolls?" she said. She picked up one and bit into it.

"It is a bread roll, husband," she said gleefully.

"Gather them," said the peasant, "and our larder will be full for a few days."

Hastily the wife collected all the sausages and rolls of bread.

The peasant said that they would go home after checking the net and the snare. "A very lucky day it is," he said to his wife. "There is a bird in the net and a fish in the snare." In her joy the woman did not ask why it was the other way round.

Back at the cottage, the two ate a hearty meal of bread and sausages. What was left over, the good woman put away for the next day and the day after.

This was the moment the peasant was waiting for. In a low voice he told his wife about the gold coins. "Come with me," he said, "and we will bring the jar home."

The wife got ready in no time. Quietly the

peasant sprinkled some pigeon's blood on her dress, and they set out with a barrow.

Reaching the field, the peasant looked up. "There are no clouds in the sky," he said, "but it is raining."

His wife looked at her dress and replied, "Yes, it is raining from a clear sky. What is more, the drops are red."

Together they lifted the jar and placed it on the barrow. And they started back. This time the peasant took a different route.

They passed by the lord's house. From the sheepfold came the sound of bleating.

His wife asked him what that noise was. The peasant said that the devil must have seized the lord and the servants were weeping.

They hastened home. The peasant hid the gold in the barn. Tired as they were, they went to bed.

The peasant got up much earlier than his wife. He dug a pit where nobody would suspect it and buried the jar.

Later in the day, the peasant's wife told her gossip-loving friends about the gold coins her husband had found in his field.

The gossips told others about the peasant's luck.



Before long the lord heard about it. He came riding to the peasant's cottage.

"You rogue," he thundered, "you found gold coins in the field I gave you. But you kept the news from me. I shall punish you."

A crowd of villagers gathered there. The peasant pleaded that he had found no gold.

"But your wife says that you have," said the lord. He questioned the woman before all.

"Yes, he found gold coins, my lord," said the woman. "We brought them home on the night sausages grew on the hedge and bread rolls lay scattered near it."

Everybody laughed at her answer

"Soon after," she added; "my husband found a bird in the fish net and a fish in the snare. It also rained red from a clear sky that night"

The crowd roared with laughter.

"On our way back," continued the woman, "we heard your servants weeping, for the devil had seized you."

At this the lord, who had begun to feel amused, got angry again. He declared she ought to be punished for making a

fool out of everybody.

"Listen, my lord," the woman begged, "my husband hid the gold in the barn."

The lord ordered his servants to search the barn. They obeyed at once, but found nothing. He excused the peasant. The lord was still angry with his wife, and punished her.

The punishment was anything but nice. But it did the woman one good. It cured her of the habit of blabbing out secrets.





Dear insects and outsects, Yes, I said, of course I can do it. Yes, I will.

Why did I ever say that? Why on earth or in heaven did I say that? Why?

It was during the science class. Our science Sir (SS) wanted us to start off on our science projects for the exhibition we are going to have next month. "Who can catch a mosquito?" he asked. "A common mosquito?"

My hand shot up. My wretched, miserable hand. And my wretched, miserable voice said, "I'll do it, Sir. I'll catch a mosquito. Yes," I said, "of course, I can do it. Yes, I will."

A mosquito. A common household mosquito. That won't be difficult, I thought. Not as difficult as catching a frog (Raghu) or catching a fly (Gnat) — Gnat, in my case, can catch nothing except a cold. He is one of those kind of people, the kind that has toes for fingers. And I...?



I thought I was nimble and quick. That for me, catching a mosquito, a common household mosquito would be as simple as ... as blowing up a balloon. Although a balloon can be hard. I remember once... Anyway, that's not the point at tissue here. I mean the point at issue. I have other, more tragic things to talk about viz the mosquito. The household common mosquito.

The fact is our household is full of mosquitoes. I only have to open the window of my room and I can get about three thousand mosquitoes, not including those who are here for a business conference or are on holiday.

Some of them, friendly chaps, make a dive for my room and buzz about over my head and along my arms. Easy to catch one, you might think. The more ambitious among you would say, 'Easy to catch twenty or a hundred.' Believe me people, that's what I thought, too. I thought mosquitocatching would be as easy, especially in my room, as easy as catching a train that's late. But I'm now a wiser, sadder man.

That evening, I sat in my room waiting for darkness to fall. Finally, I don't see how darkness falls. It usually floats up from under my bed up to the sky. But anyway... I waited for darkness. Dark is how the mosquitoes like it. Dark and warm. You can see I have studied the little fellows habits quite well. I have made a note of their likes and dislikes and their social behaviour and dark and warm is how they like it. So I sat there by the window, as the darkness grew darker, waiting for them to greet me with a cheerful bite.

I waited. No mosquitoes. I waited some more. None. I waited a great sum of time. Zero. I tapped the window. I made cooing sounds. I clicked my tongue and some cow in the neighbourhood answered. But no mosquitoes. My brother came into the room looking superior as always. "Looking for mosquitoes?" he asked. "I have one in my room. What will you give me for it?"

What a terribly commercial brother I have. He has the heart of a tradesman. But there was nothing I could do, I gave him what he wanted, my new double eraser. My eyes were wet. But I thought of the mosquito, of science and of sacrifice. I went with him to his room. The mosquito was buzzing around his desk.

I held my breath and

moved towards the desk. The mosquito glided to the bed. I took a left turn. The mosquito flew into the curtains. I jumped. The mosquito sailed back to the desk. I moved with the quickness of a hunter. The mosquito waited, then darted down to my leg. It bit my ankle and then settled in the wastepaper basket.

And all the time my brother stood near the door, smiling.

I emptied the wastepaper basket. It contained toffee wrappers, a million of them, and an almost new eraser. I put the eraser into my pocket and saw the mosquito grinning at me from the floor, a foot away. I tried to grab it and fell over the wastepaper basket. The mosquito sat snuggly on the hill of toffee wrappers. I made a swipe at it. It swam back to the top of the desk and sat there. licking its paws or whatever. I jumped up as quick as a flash of lightning and hit the edge of the desk. I went down, hugging the wastepaper basket in a brotherly way.

My brother stood near the door, smiling.

"Blood sucker," I yelled.
I meant it for both of
them, the M and the B.



"Insect," I shouted and threw my brother, sorry, the wastepaper basket at the insect. It missed and hit the inkpot. The inkpot rolled out its tongue and spilled all over the desk.

"That will mean your new shuttlecock," my brother said, in a satisfied voice. He was still standing near the door.

I got up dizzily and put my hand on the desk to steady myself.

"Science!" I muttered.
"It's all for science."

The mosquito settled on my hair, chewing the cud or whatever.

While going to school the next day, I met Raghu

frog-eyed and decorated with twigs in his hair.

"What happened?" I asked.

"Frogs," he said bitterly, "should be exiled, beheaded and sentenced for life. They are not fit to be human beings."

Apparently he had spent half the night in the garden singing frog songs. But no frog answered.

"Maybe it was the wrong tune," I said.

When we reached school, we found that Gnat was empty-handed but with a cold SS gave Raghu and Gnat a heavy scolding, then turned to me and said, "I can see

young man, that you have used the curliness of your hair to good effect." He then flung his hand into my hair and brought out the mosquito.

I now have my mosquito safe in an empty matchbox. It's become quite a friend now and I feed it with red ink. I don't think it will survive though. It will sacrifice its life for science just like the way I sacrificed my eraser and shuttlecock. Sob!

Yours science minded,

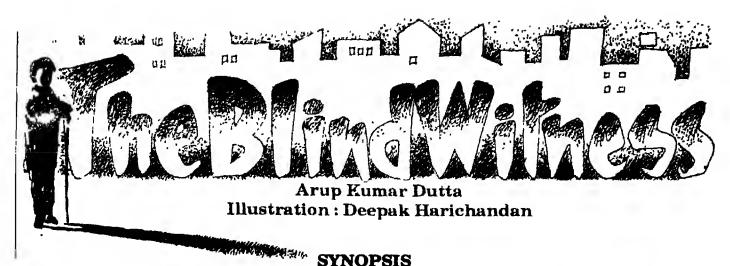
Perky

IT'S DIWALL, FRIENDS ...

Come Diwali and it is time for joy, merrymaking, brightness, giving and sharing. This time round when you celebrate the Festival of Lights—

- Spare a thought, make a kind gesture towards those less fortunate than you.
- Consider spending a little less than you have been given on crackers and buy some joy for the less privileged instead.
- Invite such a person to spend Diwali with you.
- Think of the darkness in the quake-hit villages of Maharashtra. Many boys and girls like you there may have lost their homes and loved ones in the disaster. So consider celebrating with some restraint.
- Do not tease or frighten any animal with crackers.
- Be careful while handling crackers. Spread the light of joy and have a happy Diwali.

Bhavana Nair



Ramu is blind but relies on his keen sense of hearing to get by in life. One afternoon,

back from school and tuned to the sounds of the tenement in which he lives, he hears two unfamiliar footsteps alongwith Mr.Gopalan's with which he is familiar. A few minutes later a gun shot shatters the afternoon stillness and Ramu recognises the two unfamiliar footsteps racing down the staircase. Mr. Gopalan is dead. Ramu can identify the killers, but will the police listen to a blind boy?

Now read on...

THE MYSTERIOUS Mr. GOPALAN

The police arrived half an hour later. They threw a cordon round Mr. Gopalan's room and ordered everyone back to their quarters.

Ramu re-entered his room, his brain in a whirl. He sat at his study table and tried to organise his thoughts.

It was clear that one of those two men, Boka or Ranga, had shot Mr. Gopalan. Ramu, knew their names, had heard their voices and could identify them. That was important.

While asking everyone to clear the corridors a policeman had said that they would make room-toroom enquiries for evidence. So Ramu would wait for the police to come to the door. He would then tell them everything he had heard and deduced.

An hour later he again heard three people come down the stairs. One of them was Mr. Chopra, an old man who knew every family in that building. Obviously the police had enlisted his aid while making their room-to-room enquiries.

Ramu waited expectantly for the police to come to the door. But the footsteps were moving away, bypassing his room.

"What about this family?" a voice asked.

"Oh, no one's there right now," Mr. Chopra replied. "Only a boy who is totally blind. I doubt if he can be of any help."

"Right," agreed the other voice. "We'll simply

be wasting time."

Ramu wanted to rush out and tell them how wrong they were. But his fierce self-respect held him back, as tears welled up in his eyes.

What were the words Mr. Chopra had used? Only a boy who is totally blind! Why only? No one's there right now! Wasn't he someone?

He had met with such reactions from people many a time. He should have got used to these thoughtless remarks by now, but had not. Some people considered his handicap to be a disease and were instinctively repelled by him. Others were gushingly sympathetic and patronising. Ramu did not quite know which of these two attitudes he disliked most.



All he wanted was that people should behave normally with him, just as they would with any individual with two perfect eyes. Blindness

was not a disease. It was simply that he was born without one of his senses. Nothing to arouse repulsion or pity.

Such attitudes and remarks tended to sap his self-confidence.

That was why he did not go out and voluntarily give information. He was not sure the police would take him and his version seriously. He had rather wait for his parents and seek their advice.

As always, his parents arrived together. His father had already come to know about the killing and was seething with indignation.

"The scoundrel!" he was saying angrily to Ramu's mother as they entered. "He fooled us for so long."

"True," agreed his mother, nodding vigorously. "Pretending to be so good and respectable too, when he was a petty thief, a crook."

"What're you two talking about?" Ramu demanded, totally mystified.

"That rascal, Gopalan," replied Ramu's father. "Do you know what he was? A petty crook! A receiver of stolen goods! Pah!"

"But pitaji....." Ramu was about to protest when his father cut him

short.

"No doubt about it. The police searched his rooms and uncovered a huge consignment of stolen property. You know Gopalan ran a small shop in the Bauri Gate area. Well, that shop was simply a front to receive stolen goods."

"He came to this house only a year ago," his mother added from the inner room. "I wonder how he managed to get accommodation here, when the waiting list is a mile long. I never liked the man, really."

"A bullet through his head," said his father. "Serves him right. Those who live by sin die by sin too."

"There must be some mistake,' thought Ramu, but he knew better than to argue with his parents. He realised the uselessness of talking to his father about the information he possessed. His

father, he was certain. would advise him against going to the police.

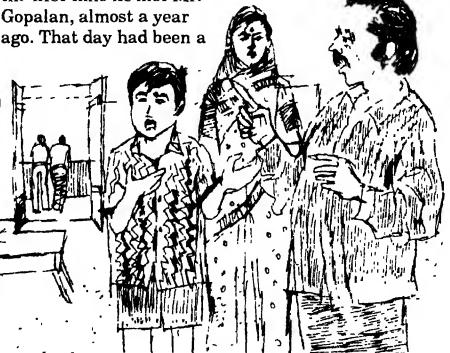
In the evening he went out and roamed the corridor of his own floor. He overheard a number of groups conversing animatedly. The topic was invariably the death of Mr.Gopalan. Everywhere the same judgement. Gopalan was a crook and a thief. Not many tears were shed for him in the building that day.

At night Ramu lay in bed, unable to sleep. His mind was confused. Mr. Gopalan was one of the few persons who had behaved normally with Ramu, had encouraged him, taught him self-respect. How could such a person be a had man?

Ramu still remembered the first time he met Mr. Gopalan, almost a year

difficult one at school. The teacher had complained to the headmaster, pointing out that Ramu's presence in the classroom hampered the progress of the entire class. While dictating notes she had to go slow in order to give Ramu enough time to take them down in Braille. When she used charts or diagrams, she had to take into account the fact that Ramu was blind. The teacher was sympathetic, but practical.

So was the headmaster. In Ramu's presence he told the teacher that in India teaching facilities for the blind and other physically handicapped were inadequate. Students like Ramu had to be accommodated. But under



no circumstances, should the entire class suffer for one boy. The instructions were clear. The teacher while teaching should maintain her normal speed. If Ramu could not keep pace it was his misfortune.

Ramu returned home that day extremely sad. He went upto the terrace and sat upon the parapet to think things out.

It was then he heard footsteps approach and a cheerful voice say, "You seem to be sad, child."

Something in that struck a responsive chord in Ramu's heart. He burst into tears and, without even knowing whom he was talking to blurted out all his woes.

The voice belonged to Mr. Gopalan, who had recently come to that building. The two of them talked, Ramu about himself, Mr. Gopalan about what he called courage and the will to overcome life's hurdles. As they talked, Ramu's spirits lifted. Mr. Gopalan had restored to him what he had almost lost, his self-respect.

Since that first meeting they had met quite often, inspite of Mr. Gopalan being a busy man. He encouraged Ramu to talk about himself, about his



hopes for the future. He had taken keen interest in the progress Ramu was making with his studies. He even asked Ramu to teach him the Braille system of writing and had spent quite a few evenings practising the system to make himself proficient.

Indeed, Uncle Gopalan had struck Ramu as a cheerful, kind and basically decent person.

'Never,' said Ramu to himself with conviction. 'Mr. Gopalan was not a thief or a crook!'

There was no artificiality in his voice. When people with normal eyesight talked their facial expressions as well as their hand and body gestures supplemented their words. A clever person could deceive his listeners with a facial expression of sincerity.

But for Ramu, expressions and gestures were meaningless. All that mattered was the voice of

the speaker.

Ramu had learnt to listen to voices and judge for himself whether the words emerged from the heart or from the gullet.

He had no doubt that Uncle Gopalan was not a hypocrite. The kindness in his voice was genuine.

There must be some mistake. Uncle Gopalan could not be a crook!

From his father he learnt that police enquiries in the building had not yielded any worthwhile information Hardly anyone had any evidence to disclose, that was the main reason. But there were other reasons too The revelation that Mr. Gopalan was a receiver of stolen goods had made the tenants hostile to him. They were proceeding from the fact that Gopalan was a

criminal. He must have been killed by members of a criminal gang. It would be foolhardy to volunteer information to the police. The criminals might retaliate. So the tenants of the building were tightlipped, refusing to disclose anything to the police.

Ramu came to a decision. Criminal or not, Uncle Gopalan had been extremely kind to him. The least he could do was to help the police with information that might lead to the capture of the two who had killed him.

Ramu was not a particularly courageous boy. He too was afraid of inviting the wrath of the criminal underworld. But Uncle Gopalan had taught him that true courage was not the absence of fear. It was the

overcoming of fear to do what one believed to be right and just.

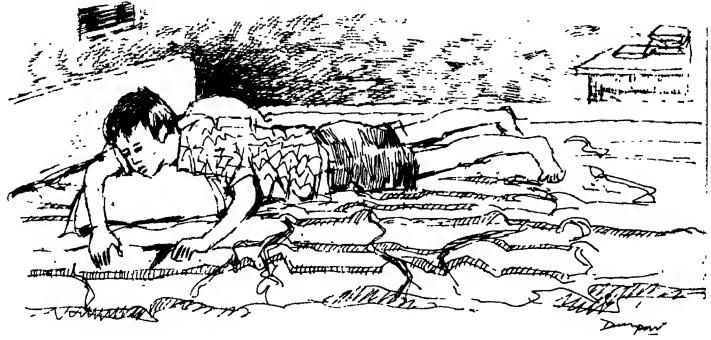
So, tomorrow at school, he would ask Sunil to take him to the police outpost in their locality. But would the police believe a blind hoy's tale?

When they came to the building, they did not even care to question him. So there was no use going to the police post. The next best thing he could do would be to go a private detective and tell him everything

He knew of one who had an office not too far from his school. His name was Om Prakash.

'Yes,' decided Ramu, 'I shall go to Mr. Om Prakash and tell him all I ':now. I'm sure he will nelp That's the least I can do for Uncle Gopalan.'

To be continued



RAM KAVVYA

The Poetics of the Ramayana

A review by Vaijayanti Tonpe Photographs courtesy: DPS - RKP

It was startlingly cool for an early October evening. The tingle of shivery excitement that ran down one's spine was partly from the coolth but more from the setting and the anticipation built up by the twenty foot stage at varying heights.

One could not have asked for a better setting or better timing for yet another production of Valmiki's eternal epic, Ramayana.

Delhi Public School,

R.K. Puram naturally had their own reasons for staging their production of Ram Kavvya. The most heartening being, that the previous year they had staged a well-known Broadway hit, Arthur Webber's Starlight Express, which the students had performed with great elan on skates. Having realised however that Starlight Express was probably too alien to our culture and ethos, they wanted to do this year

from their very cultural roots and yet proved a challenge. Valmiki's Ramayana, in spite of the recent controversies within the country regarding religion, still beckoned. Basically, because the Ramayana is not a religious work but a literary one. The emphasis, therefore, on the word Kavvya.

Valmiki himself was the *sutradhar* of the *Ram Kavvya* production.

He talked of how he came to perceive the story of Rama, which he had heard through folk tales and stories, after the death of the Kronch birds (curlew), which are known for their faithfulness to each other. The kavvya arose spontaneously from his witnessing this scene and was primarily meant to evoke the karuna ras and not so much to glorify Rama as God, but as maryada purush! The onstage-sutradhar Valmiki's vision of just such a kavvya was not



CHILDREN'S WORLD NOVEMBER 1993

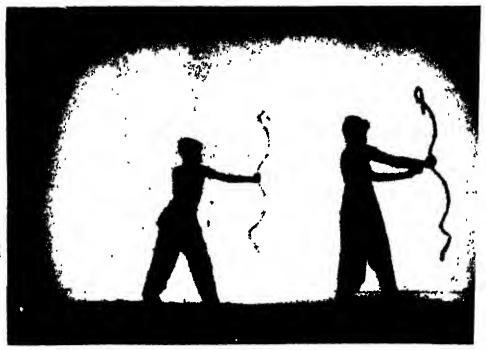
difficult to conceive. Right there before our eyes, scenes from the epic were being enacted on the superbly designed but simple stage.

It is not for nought that Padma Vibhushan Pandit Biriu Maharaiii insisted that were he to be associated with this production, then it would have to be in the open-air and not in a stuffy auditorium. The effect of an open-air performance can be startling, especially if backed by perfectly synchronised lighting effects. In this production of Rama Kavvya lighting played a vital role not only for the onstage performers, but also backstage, for many scenes were enacted in shadow-play behind the enormous white backdrops. These were especially effective when the monstrous might of Ravana was conveyed with three simultaneous roops of the demon king, through shadow play. Rama's breaking of Shiva's bow in Janaka's court to win Sita was another scene that gained magnitude because of shadow play.

The lilting music and the lively singing of the chorus blended well with the classical dance steps so appropriately choreographed by Smt. Vaswati Mishra. There was Kathak for the Ayodhya court, Kathakali for Rayana and Bharata Natvam for Soorpnakha. Valmiki played sutradhar or narrator throughout the show in conversational English! Some of the most vital dialogues too were in English. If that sounds contrary, contradictory, and outragecus-well therein lies the rub!

Delhi Public School's Ram Kavvya was that much more endearing and so much closer to one's own psyche only because it did not pretend to raise itself to pompous and lofty heights. It was a

school production, by school children, for the enjoyment and enlightenment of children of this generation. So refreshingly, it was not an over-Sanskritised, overdramatised, over-worshipful production, but a down-to-earth, easily understood-even-by-thetiny-tots-show. In fact for die-hard cynics, given to fault-finding and nitpicking like this reviewer, the entire show came as a pleasant surprise. Especially since one was expecting the big names associated with the production Smt. Vaswati Mishra - choreographer, Mr. Jeevan Pani, script writer, Messrs Satish and Sameer Bhatia, music, Mr. Gautam



Bhattacharya, lights, Mr. Anil Razdan, masks and headgear—to hog the limelight. But at the October 4 press preview show one was pleasantly surprised to feel their presence only through their conspicuous absence. In fact, the onstage performers were so intense and the off-stage 'helpers' so well-coordinated in their-change-of scenery help, that they must have brooked no interference or required very little control from the adults in charge of the production.

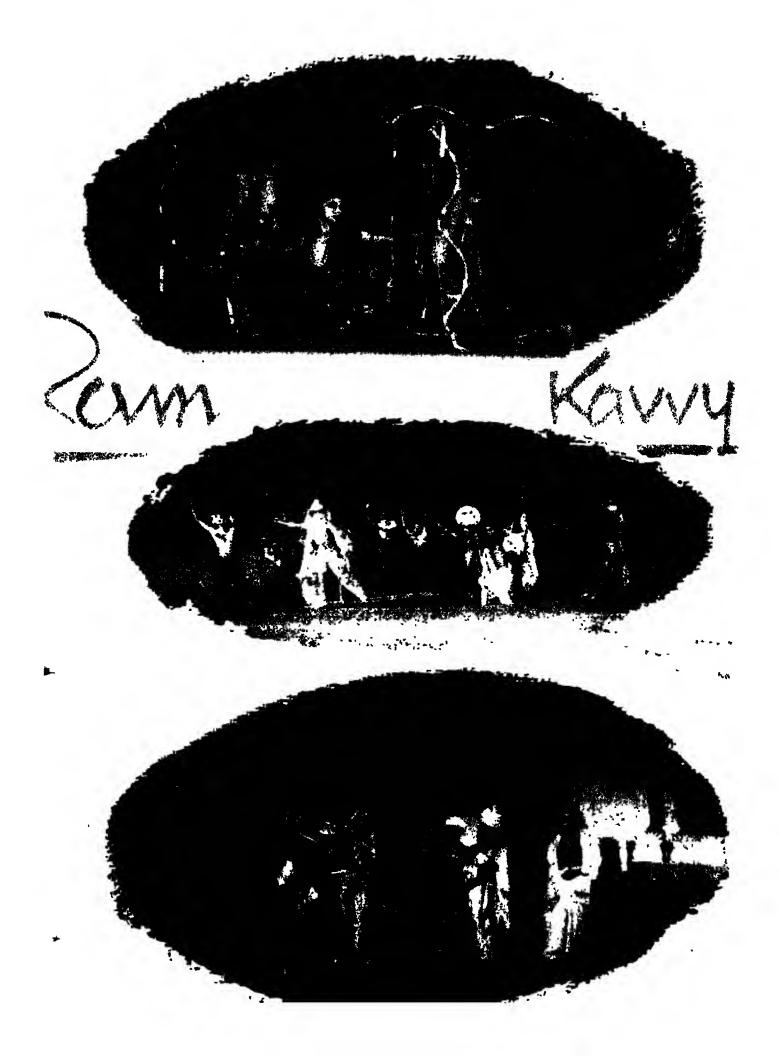
At the press conference preceding the show by a few days we were informed, "the boy who plays Rama is a Muslim," and one wondered why the fact should be stated.

After seeing the production—it was easy to understand. He was by far the best performer And in school, all that matters is how good you are—not who you are born as. And so charged with electricity and the spirit of Rama was the Rama of Ram Kaccya it seemed irrelevant what the boy's name was. He seemed a natural leader. just as Ravana seemed to be perfectly chosen for the

part. Lakshmana, Hanuman, Valmiki, Ahilya and Soorpanakha too were good. Only Sita seemed stiff and wooden.

Rama Kavvya will probably prove to be poetic justice for Mrs. Shyama Chona. Principal of DPS, R.K. Puram and her staff and school students. At the press conference her anxiety about the large production involving children from age 10--to class XII students over the period April October 93 seemed to stem not so much from missed classes or latenight rehearsals—as much from putting forth a show that should prove meaningful to those involved in it and those seeing it, so that it could bring about a radical change in their day-to-day lives. With justifiable pride, she talked of how all the participants insisted on appearing for their Monday-tests and exams even though they had been exempt from the schedule and were to be tested later. So, it was even at the early planning stages that the positive aspects of doing a production of this magnitude had begun to be felt. Rama's devotion to duty, Lakshmana's devotion to his brother all seemed to have influenced the participants, just as their roles had while doing Starlight Express. Which just goes on to prove that if there was an example of true Bharatiya shiksha through the perfect blend of the ancient and modern, with no contradictions posed by language then it is not difficult to foresee in the future, a balanced, well-blended. well-informed Indian, proud of his heritage, and perfectly capable of relating the universal aspects of an ancient literary text to his modern living styles. For no work is religious or venerable unless its tenets can be woven into day-to-day-life with ease.

Through this production of Ram Kaveya,
DPS—R.K. Puram has proved this is possible—in fact through a rather didactic but apt dialogue at the end of the production, Valmiki went on to add, "Now that you have seen the story of Rama as I conceived it, go a step further take this pothic (text) read it and understand it better."





30 ahead

I remember
the day we
moved into our
new home. The boys
and girls on the block
looked like they were having
hazaar fun. But no, they didn't
look too interested in me

How do you walk up to a new gang and make them your pals? Think Think. So I just chuck a Try-Me in my mouth.. walk my best tough-guy-walk and offer them a handful of Try-Me - "Go ahead,

Try Me!" Yeah I made five new best pals that day.



CHILDREN'S WORLD



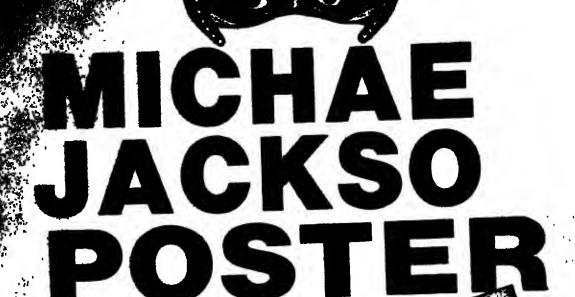
Are We Alone in the Universe







(See report on page 6)



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Area Representatives BOMBAY CH. Viswanath 502-A, Arun Chambers. 5th Floor. 317, Shahid Bhagat Singh Road. Opp.-Fort Market Bombay 400038

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 $^{rac{1}{12}}$ are we alone in the universe?

A report of the National Science Seminar Bhavana Nair

WILL RAMU GO TO SCHOOL?

Experience Rajesh P

AROUND THE WORLD FINLAND

Ravi Laitu

THE BOY AND THE MAGICIAN

A Finnish Folktale O.P. Bhagat

THE GENEROUS SQUIRREL

Akshata Shanbag

JAMSHEDPUR

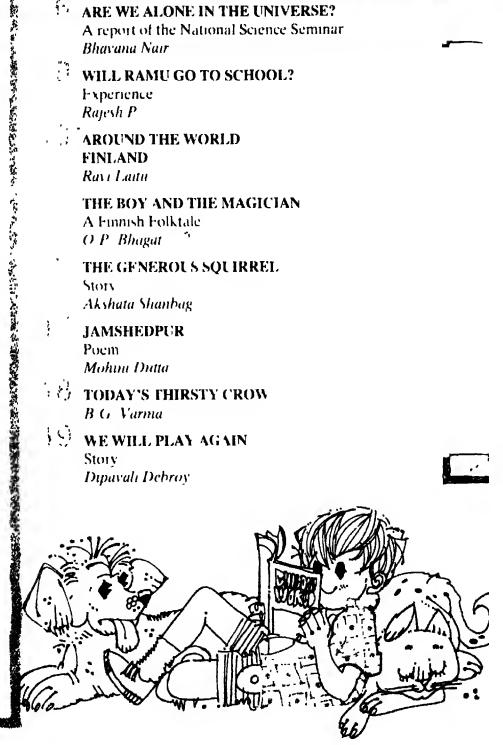
Poem Mohini Dutta

 \mathbb{R}^3 today's thirsty crow

B G Varma

WE WILL PLAY AGAIN

Story Dipavali Debroy



WORLD

- CROSSQUIZ

 Lalita Decpak
- HAVE YOUR CAKE AND EAT IT TOO Story

 E Shailaja Nair
- QUICK-TO-MAKE
 CHRISTMAS CAKE
 Recipe
 - THE BENGAL FLORICAN
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 - WHO FOOLED WHOM?
 Comics
 Abdul Mukhtar & B. G. Varma
 - THE FATEFUL LETTER Story Ujval Gandhi
 - WRITERS AND THEIR KINKS
 Davidar
 - THE BLIND WITNESS—Part III Serial story Arup Kumar Dutta

Cover design

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B.G. Varma

- LEMON AND CHEESE Story Svetha Venkatram
- THE OVERRIPE BANANA EXPERIENCE

Children's World wishes its Readers

A Merry Christmas



Dear Editor.

JOY IS THE HARING What is joy? Joy is something to be shared... Joy is carrying a big umbrella and inviting others to come. under it with you. The Heavenly Father created you to be His Joy You unlock the joy When you smile with your eyes You have a fountain of Joy within you Let your Joy bubble up Let it spill over and splash Let your Joy wash all over your neighbours. Joy is a handful of daisies. Lillies and lotuses tied together with a yellow ribbon of Love and ogetherness.

> Niranjan M. Khilnani, New Delhi

FABULOUS TOUR PAGES

I read your November '93 issue and was pleasantly surprised and immensely satisfied by the input it contained. After reading it, I was so filled with poetic ideas, such high and good quality language that it proved the excellent calibre accepted in and expected by Children's World. The issue was fabulous, showing the amount of talent in us children. Thanks a million Children's World for tapping our talents and helping us blossom out to spread the fragrance of our budding talents in our own little ways. I have improved my language over the years reading Children's World. Hats off to Sarvar Abbi for her commendable work. It was undoubtedly 'the best'.

> Suba Vasuderan (14), Bombay

> > . Creers

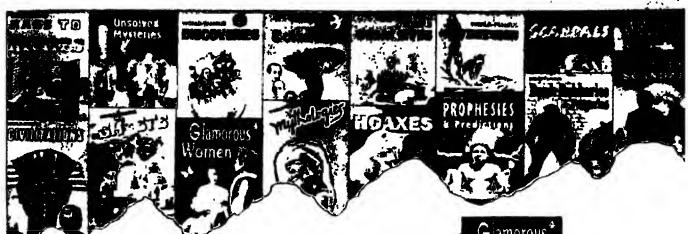
Why is it that the last month, each year gives you the feeling, you are looking through a pair of binoculars or have the

eye-piece of a kaleidoscope glued to your eye? It is like having the entire mosaic of the year gone by in sharp focus. The nice moments you enjoyed, the pictures of happy events, the achievements, suddenly shift willy-nilly to give way to the mean things you said but regret now. The sadnesses blur across the eye-piece, confusing you as to whether the pain is more potent in recollection or is in reality an ache vou have learnt to live with. Invariably images of world events, your country's, town's and home's are interspersed with the very personal ones.

Surprisingly, there is relief in the fact that there is a recognisible "end" to the calender. An end signifies a beginning and as the spirit of Christmas, towards the tail-end of the month and year sets in, spreading joy and cheer, it slowly but surely builds up the anticipation of an exciting new year ahead.

So, till the new year is really upon us, indulge 1993, have a Merry Christmas and spread joy and happiness all around.

Editor



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Answers for inquisitive minds—How ancient civilizations were born Their law, architecture and education. How some prospered and some declined.



HOAXES

Narratives of wits of clever 8, terrorising deeds of insome would give readers several moments of laughter

Are We Alone In

A report by Bhavana Nair

T is an intriguing question the answer to which has long eluded man. The search for intelligent life outside Earth has been an ongoing process. It has been intensified now with the availability of technological marvels for travel and communication.

Following the Big Bang—the most popular theory about the origin of the universe—scientists feel there must have been other planets or bodies which developed environmental conditions similar to Earth's, conducive to sustaining life forms. They also think that there must be other solar systems with a star like the sun and a planet at the same distance from it as the Earth and the sun. Such a planet should

support life. Other scientists believe that life could exist elsewhere under conditions totally different from Earth's.

Whatever the argument, mankind has done and is doing all it can to search for life outside Earth. We have set up giant radio telescopes to send and pick up messages by radio waves. Experiments like SETI

Sharon Kuruvilla recenting her award from ShriP.R.Kumaramangalam, Union Minister of State for Science and Technology.



CHILDREN'S WORLD DECEMBER 1993

The Universe?

(Search for Extra-Terrestrial Intelligence) and others are also being conducted. UFOs have reportedly been sighted but so far there have been no responses to our signals or overtures for an interplanetary or intergalactic or whatever kind of friendship.

All this was the substance of the topic 'Are we alone in the Universe?' debated at the National Science Seminar held on October 15. The Seminar was organised by the National Science Centre, New Delhi. Thirty-one

school students thrashed out the issue. These students, all younger than 15 years, representing every State and Union Territory except Lakshadweep, had gathered for the finals of the Seminar.

Armed with facts, charts and slides, the finalists spoke with abundant confidence. Each student was given six minutes to put across his views in English, Hindi or his or her mother-tongue. Some of them came attired in their State dress lending

colour to the occasion. (See pictures on cover II.) It was but natural that the content of their speeches were more or less the same; what was important was who put across the points most convincingly.

The objectives of the National Science Seminar are to inculcate in the minds of the young students a spirit of scientific enquiry and analytical thinking, to provide a platform for budding scientists to exchange ideas and to generate a feeling of national inte-



gration among the young students who gather from different parts of the country.

The National Science Seminar is organised at various levels—taluka, block, district, state, and national. This year's 31 finalists came up from among over 50,000 students who participated in the Seminar at these levels.

Sharon Kuruvilla from Kerala received the top award of the National Council of Science Museums (NCSM) scholarship of Rs.200 per month. This will be valid for two years.

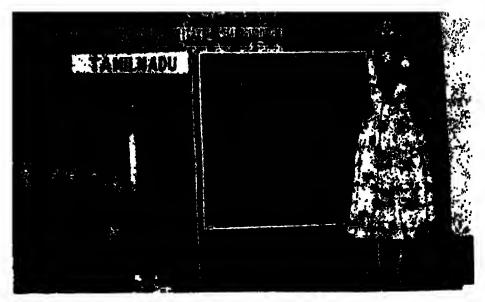
The next ten winners—Mahima Ashok from
Tamil Nadu, Sandigdha
Senapati from Orissa,
Anindya Basu from West
Bengal, Yondella Ovung
from Nagaland, Anu
Shahi from Punjab,



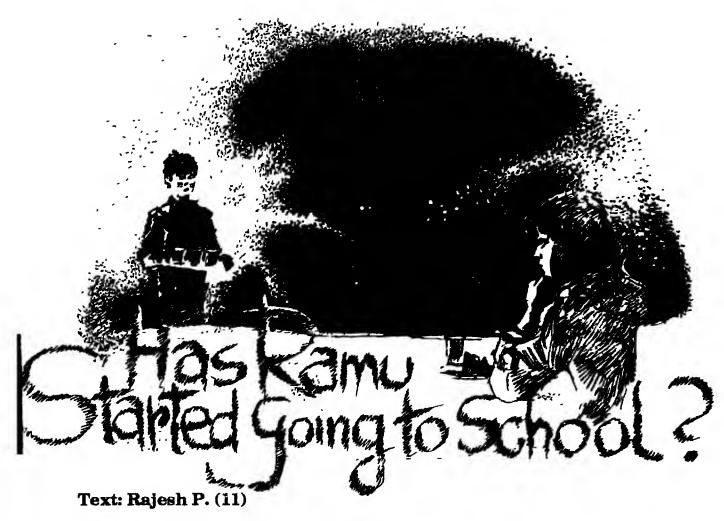
Kavita Chechani from Rajasthan, Satarupa Bhattacharjee from Tripura, Krishna J. Desai from Gujarat, Sourav Roy from Chandigarh and Purushottam Bhalchandra Kale from Maharashtra received the two-year NCSM scholarship of Rs.100 per month.

All participants also received science kits and books as prizes, as well as one year's free subscription each to *Children's World*, with compliments from CBT.

Are we alone in the universe? The question itself suggests a possibility. But till our efforts bring positive results, mankind must go its lonely way, content to leave alien beings and extra-terrestrial intelligence in the realm of science fiction.



CHILDREN'S WORLD DECEMBER 1993



Illustrations: Deepak Harichandan

Once I was going to my uncle's place in Jaipur by bus, with my parents, during the Dussera vacation. After three hours of travelling the bus stopped at a wayside hotel for lunch and snacks.

A small boy of my age, who took our order, served us tea and snacks after a couple of minutes. Seeing such a young boy on the job, many questions crossed my mind like—"Why was such a young boy working at a tea-shop? Doesn't he go to

school? Why don't his parents prevent him from working?"

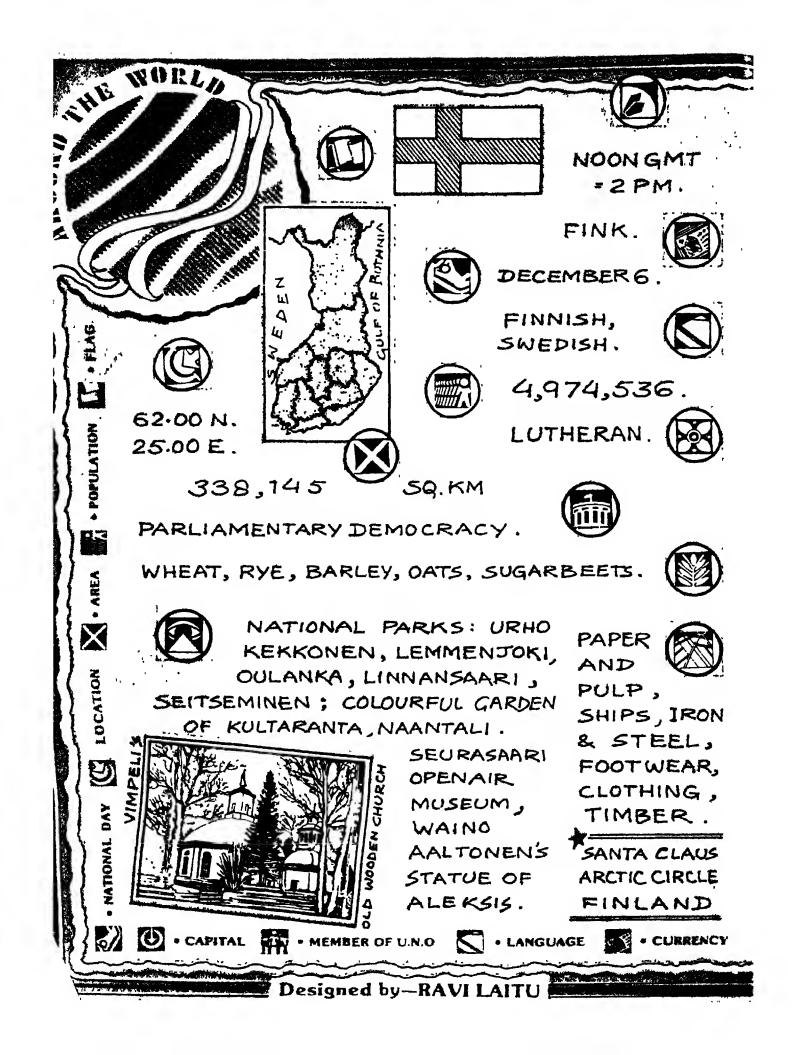
I quickly finished eating and went to the wash-basin to wash my hands. There I saw the boy again. I asked him his name and many other questions, anxiously. The boy told me that his name was Ramu and that his parents had died when he was just one year old. He added that since he had no money, he had taken up the job. He expressed his desire to go to school.

I had to rush back to

the bus as it was about to start. The boy waved to me from the shop and I reciprocated. For a couple of days, his young face always used to appear before my mind's eye. Till today I have not forgotten Ramu.

This winter I am again going to Jaipur after a year. Maybe, I will get an answer to an important question still haunting my mind. Can you guess what it is? No, I will tell you—"Has Ramu started going to school finally?"

CHILDREN'S WORLD DECEMBER 1993





HELSINKI



TAMPERE, OULU, VANTAA, TURKU, JYUASKYLA, PORI, LAHTI, KUOPIO, VAASA, ESPOO, KOTKA.



DEC.14, 1955.









FLORA AND FAUNA





























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Story: O.P. Bhagat

NCE there was a farmer. He lived in a small cottage with his wife and only son, Niilo (pronounced Nylo).

One evening a traveller came to the cottage. He wanted a bed for the night. The farmer welcomed him.

The visitor was a magician. To amuse the boy he showed him some tricks. Niilo liked the way the man pulled a rabbit out of his pocket and a shawl out of his cap. He wished he could do all this.

As the boy seemed

Illustrations: Subir Roy

bright, the wizard decided to make him his pupil. He told the farmer to send his son with him. He would take him to many places and teach him all the magic he knew. "You will have to pay nothing for it," he said.

The farmer agreed. He sent his son with the magician.

Niilo learnt a lot of magic as the two travelled together. When they went to the far north, the Lapland women taught the boy how to change himself into a beast.

7. •d.

brought Niilo back to his father's cottage. The boy, now grown to a handsome youth, had learnt almost everything from his teacher.

The farmer felt so glad. But he got a shock when the wizard demanded one thousand roubles as his fee. "I spent a lot of money on the boy," he said.

That was right. But the farmer was poor. He had no money to give to the magician.

Seeing his father sad, Niilo took him aside. "I have a plan," he said. "If you agree to it, you will not have to pay the magician anything. Rather, he will give you more money than he is demanding."

Niilo explained that he would change himself into a beautiful horse. The elder would offer it to the wizard instead of money. He was sure that the man would take the horse.

"But you must remove the bridle and rein from the horse when you part with it," Niilo instructed his father.

Before long a beautiful white horse stood there. The farmer took it to the magician, who gladly accepted it.

The magician made for a market where he could sell the horse. On the way he felt hungry and stopped at an inn. He tied the horse outside.

Niilo changed himself back into his real self, and returned home.

He expected the magician to come again. He told his father that he was changing himself into a more attractive horse-reddish brown this time. If the man liked it, he must demand two thousand roubles for it.

"But remember that you remove the bridle and rein from the horse before he takes it," he added.

The wizard came, saw

the horse and agreed to pay two thouand roubles for it. But he insisted that he would take the bridle and rein alongwith the horse. The farmer said no, but he had to give in.

With the bridle and reins on, Niilo could not change back into his own form. But on the way, when the magician tied him, he managed to set himself free.

As it was running away, the magician saw the horse. He gave it a hot chase.

The horse ran across the frozen surface of a lake. But from a hole he fell into the water below.

His magic helped Niilo to turn from a horse, into a small fish. The wizard changed himself into a bigger fish and continued the hunt



Niilo turned himself into a gold ring and sank to the bottom of the lake. His pursuer did not notice this.

In springtime the ice on the lake melted. Waves washed the ring on the shore near the king's castle.

Some ladies of the court found the ring and took it to the castle. It was so cute that the princess placed it on her finger.

Niilo liked the princess. He hoped that the princess too would like him and become his bride.

One day, as the princess was washing her hands, the ring slid off her finger. Thrice it circled round her. This was Niilo's magic to make the princess like him.

Soon the princess heard a voice from a corner. It

came from the ring which lay there.

As she looked, the ring changed into a handsome youth.

"Do not be afraid," said Niilo gently, "but listen to my story." And he told her how the once kindly magician had turned into his enemy.

As she heard him, the princess found herself in love with the youth.



"Tomorrow," said Niilo, "the wizard will come to your father. He will offer the king a lot of money for your ring. The king will be ready to sell it. But when you take off the ring, be sure to drop it on the floor."

The princess promised to do so. Niilo took the shape of the gold ring again. The princess wore it on her finger.

It happened exactly as Niilo had said. The magician came to the castle and offered the king ten thousand roubles for the ring. The king was tempted to sell it.

As she took it off, the princess dropped the ring on the floor. To everybody's surprise, it turned into a heap of peas.

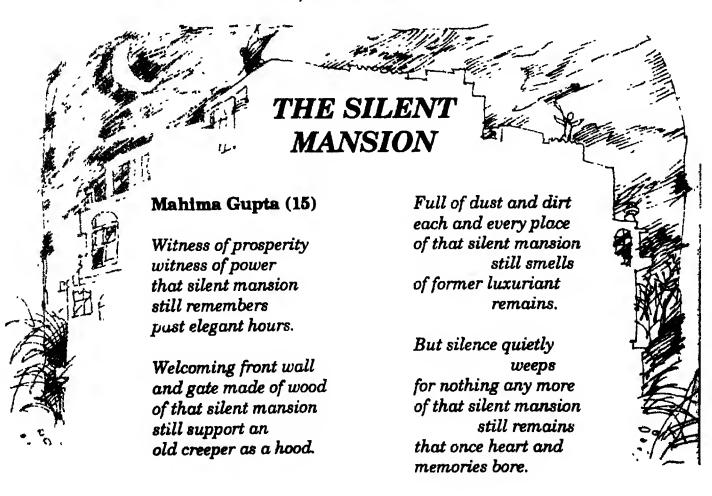
At once the magician took the form of a rooster to peck at the peas. Niilo muttered a charm. The peas changed into a fox, which swallowed the rooster in no time. With that, all of Niilo's troubles

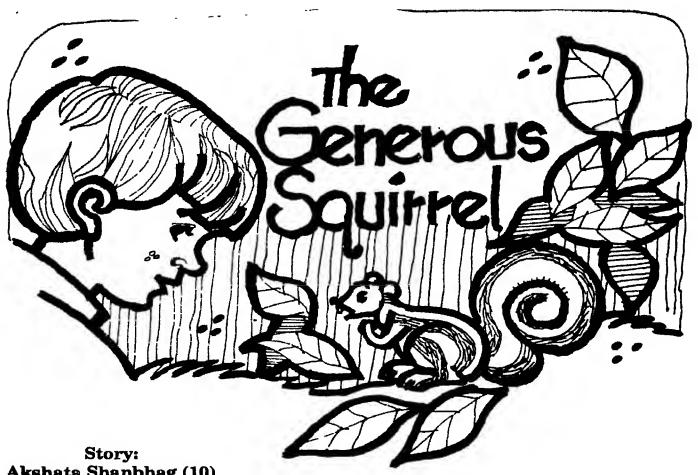
were over.

A handsome youth stood before the king. The princess told her father that they loved each other. Though scared by what he had just seen, the king agreed to their marriage.

For days there was fun and feasting. By now Niilo had had enough of magic. He decided to have no more of it.

In fact, more wonderful than magic he found his bride.





Akshata Shanbhag (10) Illustrations:Subir Roy

NCE a boy's scout master told him to run round the school field a 100 times. After running for a while, he felt tired and sat under a huge tree, in its shade. A small bird had her nest in that tree. There was a squirrel there, too. But he did not have a proper hollow to live in. Since the bird had a good house, she was very proud. She had laid her little eggs. When she saw the boy she was worried.

"This boy will rob my babies," she said, for she had heard from her friends that boys harm birds' eggs. 'I must chase him away from here,' she thought. She ate some grain and threw the husk on him. She troubled him very much.

He started to scream "Ouch! What's going on here?"

The squirrel came to see what the problem was. "Who has spoilt my sleep?" he said. He saw the bird troubling the boy, and pushed her down. "Mean little thing! Why are you troubling that poor boy?"

The bird got hurt and so she said, "I'm sorry, I won't do it again."

The next morning when the boy went to meet the

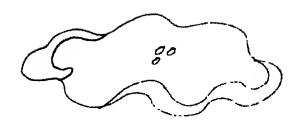
squirrel, he saw Ballu, the trapper, trying to trap the squirrel.

"Stop it!" he said. "That squirrel is my pet."

But Ballu did not agree to it. "Go away, little boy, and let me do my job," he said.

Then the boy fought with the trapper and set the squirrel free. He took the squirrel to a garden near his house and gave him a good hollow to live in.

"Thank you so much," said the squirrel and they were now best friends. But the proud bird lives alone in the same old tree.





Mohini Dutta (8)

The wind blows, The river flows, The sun glows, In Jamshedpur.

They wake up too soon,
And sleep in the afternoon,
You might see a balloon,
In Jamshedpur.

You can watch the children play Getting browner everyday, You've got nothing bad to say, In Jamshedpur.

It can start to rain,
But it will stop again,
You might see a bird and a place,
In Jamshedpur.

The birds fly,
And you see a plane in the sky.
Wave and say "Hi",
In Jamshedpur.

Swimming is fun, In the hot sun, Until it is done, In Jamshedpur.



TODAY'S THIRSTY CROW ...

B. G. VARMA





IVE that ball to me! It's mine!" shouted Madhav. "I won't," Sadashiv shouted back.

It was a red plastic ball, not usually available in the village shop. The shopkeeper had got it from the nearest town Lilabai, Madhav's widowed mother, had asked him to.

Madhav tried to wrest the ball out of Sadashiv's hand. But Sadashiv was a stout fellow, while Madhav was skinny. In the scuffle, it was Madhav who got the worst of it.

He ran away squealing to his hut just beside the village temple.

"Now he'll tell his mother and she will tell Aai (mother). I am in for some trouble," muttered Sadashiv.

His house was a little distance from Madhav's. A hut, like most of the others in the village.



Made of huge chunks of stone piled one top of on another, and roofed over with planks of wood and sheets of tin.

"Hallu-hallu (slowly),"
Sedashiv's mother,
Subhadrabai, called out,
as Sadashiv ran in and
shoved his books carelessly in one corner.
"Don't mess up the room.
I have just tidied it up."

Subhadrabai always kept her house neat and clean, with everything in its proper place. In spite of her four unruly children.

"I made some puranpollis (chapati with sweet stuffing) today," she called out. Sadashiv ran into the kitchen.

Girish, the brother who was next to Sadashiv in age, was already there, eating the *puranpollis* with relish.

Soon Archana and Ganesh trooped in.

They sat in a row, munching and chatting, all at the same time.

Outside, it was now evening. Soon their father too would be back from work.

"I'll just go to the Bhavani-mandir (temple to the goddess Parvati)," said Subhadrabai.

The children had a royal time during her

absence, with the red plastic ball that Sadashiv had brought with him.

But when Subhadrabai returned, her lips were set in a hard line.

"You good-for-nothing!" she screamed at Sadashiv. "You make it difficult for me to show my face in the neighbourhood."

"What has he done this time?" asked an angry voice from the door. Gajanan, Sadashiv's father, had just come in, sweaty and tired after a day's work in the fields.

"Stolen a ball off Madhav! His mother confronted me in the temple, and there, in front of everyone, she began to shout at me."

"But that ball was not Madhav's, Aai," pleaded Sadashiv. "I found it on my way to school. It was lying by the wayside."

"Lilabai said it was Madhav's. He had lost it on his way to school," retorted Subhadrabai.

"How was I to know that? I found it. I picked it up," replied Sadashiv.

"That does not make it yours," said his mother.

"I found it. It's mine," said Sadashiv. Dogged and defiant.

"Give it back to your friend tomorrow," his

father ordered.

"I won't, and he's not my friend," said Sadashiv. And then cried out in sudden pain. His father had slapped him hard on his cheek.

"You have to give it back, do you understand?" shouted his father.

"He will, he will," intervened Subhadrabai, drawing Sadashiv to herself. "Cool down and have some *puranpollis*," she said to his father.

Sadashiv sulked for the rest of the evening. He clutched the new-found ball in his hand and sat in a corner. He would talk to no one. He would not eat.

Then night fell and they settled down to sleep, all of them together, side by side, on the floor. Sadashiv lay in the middle, Archana and Girish on one side and Ganesh on the other, close to the walls on either side.

Archana heard
Sadashiv whimper, and
tried to draw him close.
Sadashiv broke away. He
pushed the ball deep into
the pocket of his shorts
before he fell asleep.

He woke up gasping for air. There was a heavy load pressing against his chest. He could hardly breathe.

"Tai (elder sister), tai,"

he called, as he struggled to get up. It was just dawn and in the half-light he caught sight of his sister's face beside him. It lay smashed below a huge chunk of stone. Beside her lay Girish, lifeless, still, under the stones that had formed the wall on that side of their hut. And Ganesh? He looked at the other side. Nothing but a mound of stones.

Sadashiv looked up in panic. There was the night sky looming in through the broken fragments of what had been the roof. He looked down at himself. He had gone under the sheet of

corrugated tin that had formed part of the roof.

"Baba!" his frenzied cry rang out. A groan came from some debris in another corner. There was no answer when he screamed out for his Aai.

Somehow, Sadashiv pulled himself out from under the collapsed roof, his legs so bruised that he could hardly stand on them. But he managed to crawl out into the open. He must get help from the others in the village.

He looked around. Where was the hut that had stood next to theirs? Where was the pathway?

Everything lay under

heaps of stone and rubble.

Screams and groans came from all around.

But from where? There was no one in sight. Why, it was coming from below the stone and rubble! Howls and moos of trapped animals mingled with human groans. The air was thick with dust, the morning light hazy.

Sadashiv stood in a daze, staring stupidly at the devastation all around.

"Run, run," called out someone as he emerged out of the rubble-heap nearby, and ran away. Seventy-year-old Morey running



The very next moment, the ground swayed under Sadashiv's feet. The village once more reeled under an earthquake. Tin and stone and brick and bamboo all came down together. Utensils and furniture crashed against each other. Fresh cries of agony rang out.

Sadashiv ran.

Through the nightmare of a village, out into the fields of sugarcane. Across an earth that trembled and shuddered.

A few others pushed past him. Sobbing, screaming, panting for breath.

Once he reached the shelter of the sugarcanes, Sadashiv turned round. In time to glimpse the pinnacle of the Bhavanitemple come crashing down... Upon the house beside it.

A few days later, Sadashiv sat under one of the tin-sheds that had been set up by the government for the victims of the earthquake. Beside him sat Morey and a few other survivors, all huddling together.

"Gone! All gone!" Morey kept on saying, his eyes staring ahead, unseeing. "My sons, six of them. Gone, all gone!"



Eighty-year-old Ramabai comforted him. "At least you could find them all. My Nandu, he is still under that rubble."

"The bulldozer picked up my baby," wailed another woman.

"This is all I could save," said yet another, hugging to herself a few pots and pans.

Grandfather Morey pointed to Sadashiv and broke into fresh wails. "Look at him. All alone in the world. His entire family gone. Gone, all gone, like mine."

"It was I who spotted Subhadrabai," said Ramabai. "Her right foot was sticking out from under the stones."

"Was she still alive?" asked someone.

"No. The rest of the body was unrecognisible."

"The children were all dead too..."

"They must have died in their sleep."

"But not Gajanan. He had bled to death," said a man. "I knew that as soon as I saw his body. He had even dragged himself to the door, but the door itself had got blocked up with the stones from the walls. By the time it was cleared, he had bled to death."

Sadashiv could not bear



any more of it. He crept out.

The far corner of the village was glowing red. Mass funerals were being held. Planks from the fallen roofs and broken shelves were being used as wood for the pyre. Smoke and stench wafted over the waving fields of sunflower and sugarcane.

In another corner he could see the volunteers cooking and doling out food.

A little beyond stood the shed where some of the injured were being treated. Some had already been shifted to hospitals in the towns.

The trees were the only familiar landmarks. They had stood their ground while the man-made structures had fallen.

Sadashiv stood there. All alone, as Grandfather Morey had said.

Was it just a couple of days ago that he had sat in a warm, glowing kitchen and munched puranpollis made by his mother? Romped with his brothers? Been slapped by his father?

He put his hand into the pocket of his shorts. He felt something soft and round. It was the ball. Cracked a little, like the earth itself, but very much there.

How come it had not fallen out in his desperate run for life?

How come it had not sunk into the debris along with everything else?

Sadashiv ran into the

tent for the injured.

Madhav lay there, his head bandaged. He sat up as he saw Sadashıv come in, and broke into wild howls of grief.

"Aai's gone, Sadashiv. I couldn't find her. She had gone to sleep just beside me. But when I got up, there was a huge hill there. Aai was gone."

The pinnacled temple had collapsed on their hut, Sadashıv remembered.

"Aai is gone," Madhav kept saying, half-crazed.

He clutched Sadashıv's hand. "What shall I do

now, Sadashiv? I have no one in the world now. I am all alone. Aai is gone."

"I'm here with you, am I not?" whispered Sadashiv. "There are two of us."

"But what can we do, Sadashiv?"

"I don't know. But we'll do something. Manage somehow. Now look," and he pressed the ball into Madhav's hands.

"This thing? What will I do with this thing now?" asked Madhav and threw it away.

Sadashiv picked it up and put it in Madhav's lap.

"But what good is it now? We'll never be able to play again. All that is over."

"No, of course not. We'll have good times again, Madhav. We'll cope," replied Sadashiv.

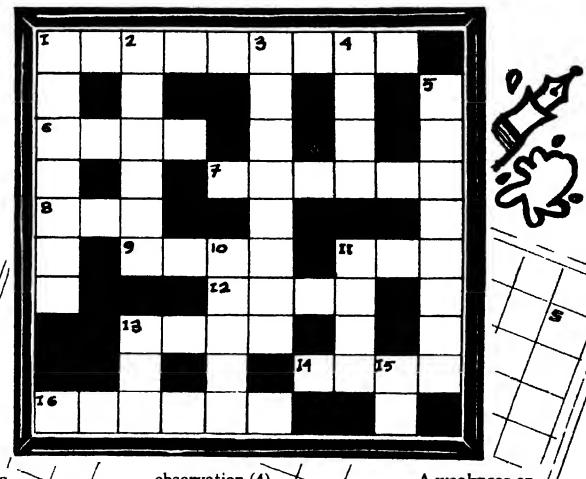
"You really think so?" asked Madhav, fingering the hall.

"Wait and see. Get well, and we'll play with our ball, you and I. We will play again," Sadashiv assured him. "Of course we will."





Lalitha Deepak



Across

- 1. Upset the ...; well-/laid plan gone awry (5,4)
- 6. ... bones; supine, indolent (4)
- 7. Semi ... divine maidens of the seas, ~ mountains or woods (5)
- \sim 8. As wise as an ..(3)
- 9.-He won with ...; a facile victory (4).
- 11. On and ...; now and then, unsystematic (3)
- 12. Hit the nail on this point to make the right

observation (4)

- 13. cause; the original and main reason (4)
- 14. He one with me; he agrees with me (2,2)
- 16. Gift to a fund or institution (6)

Down /

- 1. No play, only this makes Jack a dull boy -(3,4)
- 2. A jigsaw ...; a tricky situation (6)

A weakness or vulnerability (4,4)

- 4. As you sow so shall you ... (4)
- 5. Put one's ... forward; maké sincere efforts (4,4)
- 10. Grip by the ... hairs; grasp firmly (5)/
- `11. ... on favourite; the dark horse (4)
- 13. ... out/of money; dwindling resource (3)
 - 15 .. white .. a lily (2)



Story: E. Shailaja Nair URRY up, Sunita. We are getting late," shouted Ravi impatiently. "Both Praveen and Prashant must be waiting for us at the corner."

> "I will be ready in a minute. I am combing my hair," called out Sunita, hurriedly dragging a brush through her black curls. Ravi clicked his tongue in exasperation. Younger sisters!

Ravi, Sunita and their friends, thirteen-year-old twins Praveen and Prashant, were on their way to the huge fair which was being held for Children's Day on the

ground next to their school. Ravi and Sunita had promised to meet the twins at four o'clock. Ravi looked at his watch. It was already five to four and Sunita had still not finished with her dressing. He opened his mouth to call out to her, when he saw her skipping down the stairs.

"Next time we are not going to take you anywhere with us," he grumbled as they left the house. "I knew we should not have included a baby like you in our plans."

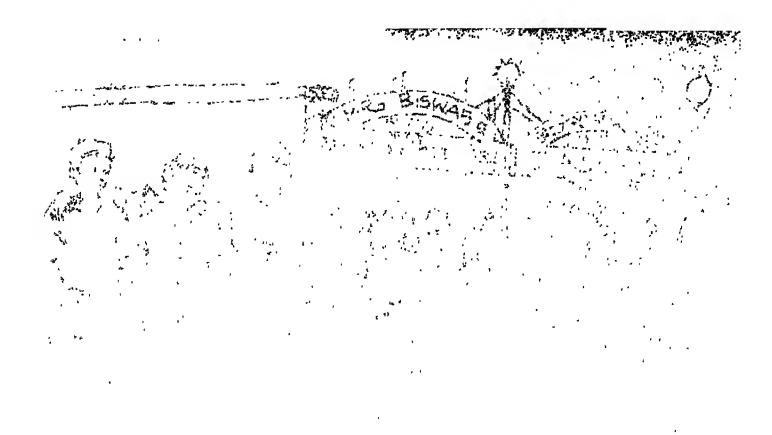
"Baby?" Sunita was most indignant. "I turned nine last week so I am

Illustrations: Deepak Harichandan

only four years younger than the three of you."

"Only four? It is quite a lot. And anyway we will be fourteen next month. You are a baby compared to us." Before Sunita could retaliate he saw Praveen and Prashant waving to them to hurry up. Ravi and Sunita ran to catch up with the twins who were already at the gate. The four of them handed in their tickets and went in.

The fair was exciting. There were giant-wheel, merry-go-rounds, toy trains and swings while all round were stalls selling everything from



pins to pyjamas. Children were running around and trying their hand at various games of skill and chance. The biggest crowd was at the tambola and lucky dip stalls.

"I want to guess the weight of the cake," said Sunita pointing to Mrs Biswas's stall. "It looks so delicious, all creamy and chocolatey." Ravi opened his mouth to say 'baby' but then thought the better of it. The cake was really nice and if by chance Sunita won it he did not want to lose a share. "OK, let's go there first," he said.

The next stop was tambola which all four

loved though they did not win anything. Gradually they worked their way around all the stalls and games till they were quite exhausted. By now they had finished off most of their money, too.

"Let us go to the stall at the corner and have some pastries," suggested Prashant.

"But I have very little money left," said Ravi.

"Doesn't matter. I am sure if we pool all our money together we will be able to get something," said Praveen.

"But we should come back to Mrs. Biswas's stall by six o'clock," said Sunita. "Mrs. Biswas said she would announce the winner of the 'Guess the Weight of the Cake' contest then."

"OK, we will come back by then though I don't think you will win it," said Ravi. "I think it weighs much more than two kilos".

"I think it weighs only half a kilogram. The size is only because of the icing," said Praveen.

"Well, I think Sunita is right. It is only a kilo and a half. For there might be nuts inside which would make the cake heavier," said Prashant.

By now they had reached the pastry stall. Sunita looked at the

array of delectable biscuit and cup cakes arranged inside the glass-fronted case and wondered which one to choose. At last she decided on a cheese pastry.

"I'll have a Danish pastry," said Praveen.

"I'll have a lemon tart," said Ravi.

"Til have the same," said Prashant. Praveen counted the money and handed it over. They sat down on the cane chairs strewn outside the stall and began on their pastries.

Sunita let her eyes
roam around as she
savoured her cake. It was
then that she saw the
boy. He looked about
eight years old and was
dressed in faded and
frayed but clean jeans

and a patched-up shirt. He had a bunch of balloons in one hand and a plastic bag carrying all sorts of toys in the other. He was standing at the pastry stall, his nose pressed to the glass case.

"Well, what do you want?" asked Mrs.
D'Souza, who was in charge of the stall. The boy merely shook his head. He left the stall with slow steps, turning back now and then for another look at the pastries and cakes.

"Daddy, I want a balloon," screamed a girl of about seven and the boy walked to where she was sitting with her parents, eating a gigantic chocolate eclair.

"Hurry up and finish the pastry, Sunita. It is almost six o'clock," said Ravi. Sunita obeyed, her eyes still on the little boy. She brushed off the crumbs from the lap and ran to join the boys who were already walking towards Mrs. Biswas's stall.

There was quite a crowd outside the stall by now. Obviously everybody who had tried to guess the weight of the cake was eager to know who had won. On the dot of six Mrs. Biswas tapped on the mike. "Hello! Hello! We are going to announce the winner of the "Guess the Weight of the Cake' contest. First let me tell you that the response to the contest has been excellent. One hundred and seven people participated and the guesses



varied from one kg to five kg. The actual weight of the cake is 1.6 kg. And the winner is Sunita Deshpande."

Even as the people clapped, Ravi, Praveen and Prashant pushed Sunita to the front. She walked up shyly and accepted the huge chocolate cake from Mrs. Biswas.

"Congratulations, Sunita," said Mrs. Biswas, smiling at her.

"Thank you," replied Sunita, still in a daze.

"I hope you are going to share it with everybody," called out Suresh, a classmate of Ravi's.

"Of course, she will but not with you," called out Ravi, shepherding his sister out of the crowd.

"Well, shall we go home now?" asked Praveen. "It is quite late and I think we had better take the cake home before it gets dusty."

"Yes, I think that's right. Why don't you and Prashant also come along to our house? Then we can all share the cake," suggested Ravi.

"Sunita has been extremely silent all this while. "Aren't you thrilled to have won the cake?" asked Prashant.

"Yes, I am. But before I go home there is some-

thing I have to do. Wait here for me, I'll be back in a moment." And she set off towards the pastry stall.

"What is wrong with her now?" wondered Prayeen.

"Search me," said Ravi, rolling his eyes in exasperation. They saw Sunita walk up to a little boy selling balloons. To their astonishment she offered him the chocolate cake. The boy seemed to be hesitating but then he took it, desire, delight and shock all vying for a place on his little brown face. Sunita turned and ran back to the boys.

"Come, let us go home," she said. The boys simply stared at her. Ravi was the first to find his voice. "Why did you do that? Are you mad? If you did not want the cake we would have been happy to have obliged you and eaten it." he stormed.

"Because he would enjoy it more than any of us," she replied.

"I am sure we would have liked it as much," he retorted.

"Yes, I know that but he could not buy it." Sunita was almost in tears. Before Ravi could say anything more Prashant spoke up. "Sunita is right. We can go and buy cakes whenever we want. Good for you Sunita for thinking about it."

"Yes, we could, but it is so exciting to win it. And anyway we don't have any money left now," grumbled Ravi.

"But we ate pastries at least. He had nothing," Sunita said.

"Doesn't matter. We'll go and ask Mummy for some money and then we can buy as many cakes as Ravi wants. But I have just realised that I don't like cakes very much. What about you, Praveen?" Prashant asked.

"I too have suddenly developed a hatred for sweet things," replied Prayeen.

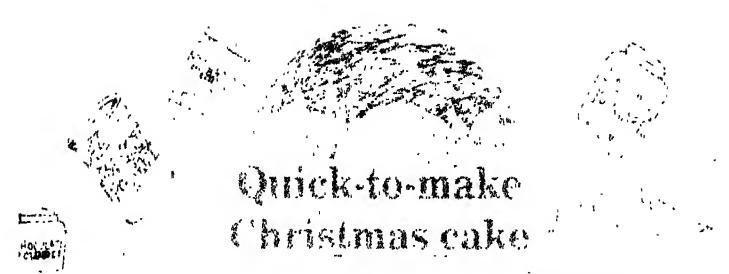
Ravi gaped. What was wrong with them? Suddenly he saw Sunita's face and grinned. He gave her a hug and said, "It is OK, Sis. I know what you did was right."

Sunita's face brightened.

"Well, let us go and have some popcorn," said Prashant. "Who likes chocolate cake anyway?"

"Not us," chorussed Sunita and Praveen while Ravi threw up his hands.

Younger sisters! But they were nice to have around anyway.



You Will Need:

Shallow cake tin Egg whisk Bowl for mixing Oven for baking

Ingredients:

100 gms flour (maida) 1/2 tsp baking powder 150 gms powdered sugar 2 eggs

To spread:

2 tsps. mixed fruit jam or

1 tbsp chocolate powder and 1 slab bitter chocolate

or

Half a cup of mixed idried fruit—currants, walnuts etc.

Method:

Grease cake tin and keep aside. Set oven to

heat at 350°F. Whisk eggs and 100 gms sugar together in bowl, till egg mix looks white and the sugar is dissolved. Now fold in the flour (maida) to which the baking powder has already been added. Whisk till the flour has blended well with eggsugar mix and pour into greased tin. Bake for 20-30 minutes.

When cake is ready, allow to cool slightly. Then dust the remaining 50 gms sugar on flour-board and place cake on top. Spread jam evenly on surface and gently fold cake into a roll.

Cut slices and enjoy the Swiss Roll with a friend or two as the cake is not very large and will also not keep for very long.

ALTERNATES:

If you are partial to chocolate then follow above method, when you add the baking powder to the flour, also add the 1 tbsp of chocolate powder to it, and make cake as above. But when the cake is "cooling", quickly melt the bitter chocolate and pour it over the chocolate cake on the flour board and roll. The chocolate will harden and you will get a firm chocolate roll which can easily be sliced.

If it is the fruity plum cake variety you long to make, then mix ingredients for cake as for the jam Swiss Roll but also add the dry fruits to the mixture before pouring into cake tin to bake. This one need not be rolled.

Have fun and Merry Christmas!



(Houbaropsis bengalensis)

Text: Minu Seshasayee (CEE-NFS)

IVING in tall grasslands interspersed with scattered scrub and bushes, the solitary male florican goes about its mundane, workaday activity of feeding, preening and nesting. Floricans are generally not gregarious by nature and move about singly. However, in the midst of their routine activity, there is a note of foreboding which characterises these birds. They patiently forage in the grass, trying to reconcile themselves to the idea of having their habitats altered by man.

Essentially belonging to the family of bustards, the Bengal floricans which were once common in the terai regions of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, the duars of Bengal and the Brahmaputra valley of Assam, are restricted today to isolated pockets in Assam, West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh.
Assam possibly has more than a third of the world's population of such floricans, the largest numbers surviving in protected areas such as Manas, Orang and Kaziranga.

Basic Truths

These peahen-sized birds have bare, long legs which are ideally suited for running and parading around. Known as *Charas* or *Charat* in Hindi and *Dahar* in Bengali, the standing height of these lonely birds is about 55 cm.

The cock and hen floricans, apart from keeping more or less segregated, differ in size and colour. The moppy crest on the head, the neck, the plume-like feathers overhanging the breast, and the underparts of the dazzling cock floricans are black in

colour, except for the exposed part of the closed wing which is coloured white. The hen floricans in contrast are buffy in general colouration and mottled with black, unlike the males whose black dorsal portion is dotted with buff. Devoid of a crest and a white patch on their wings, the hen's brown head has a streak, resembling our 'centreparting'.

Catch me if you can!

Bengal floricans have the uncanny knack of lying low in tall grass, but are very wary of outsiders in the open country.

When startled, they fly away to a distance of 100 to 300 m at grass-top height and then drop in the grass to hide, so as to prevent any observer from reaching the spot. At such moments, their alarm call is a shrill, metallic "chik-chik-chik".

The floricans feed out

in open grasslands or burnt patches in the early morning and evening. Their food chiefly consists of shoots, flowers of mustard, succulent grasses, seeds, berries and wild cardamom. The floricans also relish locusts, grasshoppers, ants and beetles.

The breeding season is usually from the latter portion of March to early April. The incubation period covers 30 days. The nests consist of simple, 'great' depressions in the ground in the vast expanses of grassland.

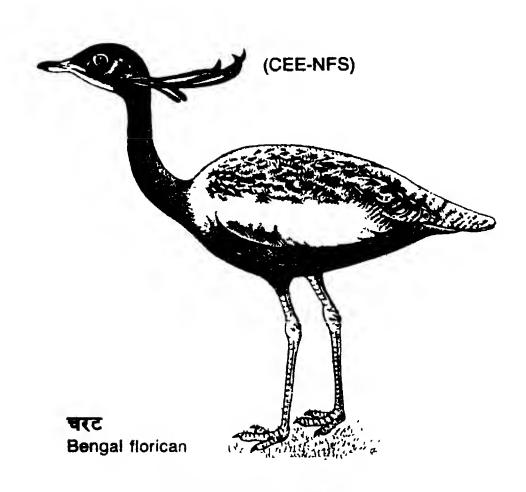
They are rather difficult to locate, as the incubating females run away, preferring to be out of sight. Two smooth, glossy eggs are laid which are generally olive-green in colour dotted with blotches of purple.

The sorry state of the threatened Bengal floricans

The Bengal floricans are perhaps the most endangered among the world's 22 species of bustards and are therefore a **Red Data Book Candidate** species.

Indiscriminate conversion of grasslands into agricultural settlements, excessive burning and overgrazing have brought these magnificent floricans closer to extinction. Such activities have been responsible for steadily modifying wilderness areas into man-made landscapes of settlement. We must put an end to our cruel acts and allow our co-inhabitants on this Earth to survive, for

"beneath the feather'd breast stirs a history unexpress'd".



























Story: Ujval Gandhi (14) Illustrations: Sudakshina Ghosh

AMLAL had retired and led a peaceful life except for a few problems of the world which plagued his once active life. He used to think of the times when he was a government official who had plenty of work and plenty of travelling to do. He used to live in a huge house and had several servants at his beck and call. He used to travel in cars and aeroplanes.

In contrast, he now lived in a three-room house and a maid came once a day to wash the clothes and clean the utensils. His wife Indira kept him in good humour. He used to spend the mornings reading newspapers and magazines. In the afternoons, he used to take a nap. His only major activity during the day was to distribute prasad at the local temple for which he used to be at the temple from 4 o'clock and come back only night.

His wife kept busy scolding the maid and gossiping with the other society women. They had a TV to entertain them. But the new-fangled modern serials and films shown on TV hardly

interested Ramlal. Not even one programme was to his liking. However, his wife had become a TV addict. He used to scold her regularly for this habit. She couldn't change, though. His life went on in this way. He had two sons Utkarsh and Ullash. One of them. Ullash, was a doctor in America while the other had been unfortunately killed in an accident a few years ago. His doctor-son had a wonderful wife, Revathi, and two kids. He used to receive a letter from Ullash once a month.

On that particular day, something distressed Ramlal. The morning mail was in his hands. Normally he used to jump with joy on receiving a letter from Ullash. However, today's letter troubled him. Superficially, the letter was all right. However, something in the letter hit him like an arrow.

Seeing his obvious distress, his wife asked him thrice about the reason. However, he was in no mood to divulge anything. He even did not go to the temple, which greatly surprised his wife.

He had read that letter over and over and now he had memorised it. That letter had been a thunderbolt to him. His whole life welled up before his eyes. At that time, he had no other desire except that of trying to give his sons the best things in the world. Yet, a big question loomed before him. Had he really been successful in this task?

His wife finally asked him the reason for his distress. He relented and showed her the letter, particularly the last line. His son had written, "Please convey my regards to my dearest Mummy and my respect to my elder brother."

His son had forgotten that his brother had already died. What a terrible slip of mind! His son had written the letter mechanically without any feelings.

(This story was written at the third Creative Writing Workshop at Bal Bhavan Baroda organised jointly by Children's World, (CBT) and Bal Bhavan Society Vadodara from October 29 to 31 1993—Editor)



THEIR WAS

OST writers have gained immortal fame on account of their brilliant penmanship but in many cases their memory is also linked with some eccentric trait.

Through James Boswell, the biographer of the great Dr. Samuel Johnson, we learn much about the peculiarities of the lexicographer, a man noted as much for his quaint ways as for his scholarship. His habit of touching every lamp-post he passed or shopping for oysters with which his cat was fed daily, not ever entrusting the duty to the servants lest put to the trouble they develop a dislike for the cat, seems trifling as compared to his manners at the dining table. Johnson, Boswell informs us, was a boor at the table who, if the food was delicious, "no longer ate, but devoured". Occa-

Text: Kalyani Davidar

sionally, in a fit of distraction he would "clench the foot of a lady and draw off her shoe". His literary life though, was not marked by such wild fits of indiscipline. His creativity did not depend on moods or moments. "A man may write at any time," said he, "if he will set himself doggedly to it."

Sir Winston Churchill too, endorsed the idea. "A writer should shut himself up in his study and work for a fixed number of hours," was his advice.

Some poets claim that versifying came effortlessly to them. Alexander Pope, for example, confessed in a couplet that even as a child he "lisped in numbers for the numbers came". Somerset Maugham's stutter caused him much embarrassment as a speaker, but as a writer he wielded a very facile pen, explain-

ing that he took to writing as a duck takes to water. The lucidity of expression and the easy flow of thoughts in his works amply testify to the claim.

The incomparable
Bernard Shaw remarked
that a bus ride stirred up
flagging creative powers
not a little. Whether it
was the jostle and jolt
that prodded his thinking
capabilities or the brief
getaway from the desk
that refurbished his mind
one does not know, but a
bus ride certainly did a
thing for the great man of
ideas.

Some writers have worked by the feeble flicker of a candle, some have scribbled in darkness and some have not been able to compose unless the room was flooded with light. French writer Emile Zola, preferred to work in a darkened room. Rousseau, the French historian, on the

other hand, could write only if the resplendent rays of the sun illuminated his desk. Understandably, Rousseau wrote very often in the open.

Mark Twain's humour extended beyond his writing for, in real life too he had funny or rather humorous ways. He smothered his eggs in pepper, nothing to be sneezed at, when he claimed that it certainly honed his creative powers. Balzac and Schiller liked the smell of rotten apples and Shelley, it is recorded, chewed at lumps of bread while he wrote. He also spent much time by ponds and rivers setting paper boats afloat. When by the seaside, he threw bottled diatribes and sent them on the waves hoping, perhaps, they would find some destination beyond the seas. De Quincey and Coleridge turned to opium and similar potent stuff to kindle new poetic thoughts.

Of Victor Hugo it is said that he preferred to stand while writing. To help him write in this upright fashion his table had to stand almost shoulder high.

Alexander Dumas was

fussy about the colour of the paper he set his literary thoughts upon. The paper had to be blue. Nothing really odd about this whim when one learns that he dressed outlandishly when he sat at his desk to write. A visitor once caught him sporting a plumed helmet and dressed in a garish, flowery dressing gown. The author explained to the bemused visitor that half his ideas were lodged in the helmet and the remainder in a pair of woollen socks that he wore when he composed love-scenes.

However kinky they might have been, every great writer had one quality worthy of admiration and emulation. All of them worked assiduously and perseveringly towards a goal and that, no doubt, was the secret of their success. Poet Laureate John Masefield. quoting an anonymous quatrain, reminds us that though the good Lord may send the fishing, we must dig the bait.



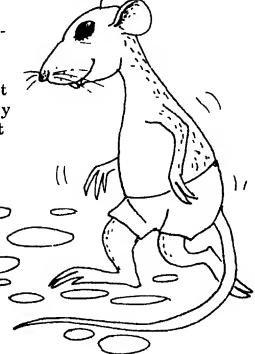
Nitishi Gupta (10) Illustrations : B.G. Varma

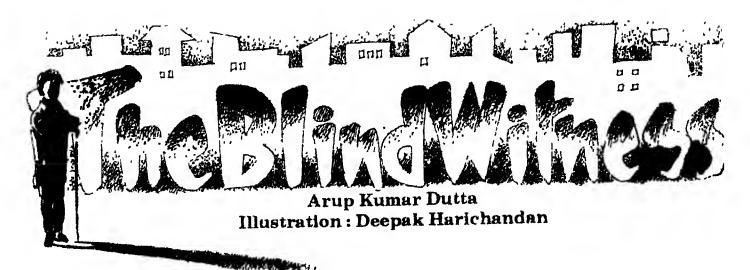
Little mouse, little mouse! Where did you go last night? I went to the jungle To show my might. I challenged lions and tigers

And invited them for a fight,
But when they roared at

It was a terrible sight.
I quickly ran back home
Still trembling with
fright.

me.





PART-III

SYNOPSIS

Ramu is blind but relies on his keen sense of hearing to get by in life. One afternoon, back from school and tuned to the sounds of the tenement in which he lives, he hears two unfamiliar footsteps alongwith Mr.Gopalan's with which he is familiar. A few minutes later a gun shot shatters the afternoon stillness and Ramu recognises the two unfamiliar footsteps racing down the staircase. Mr. Gopalan is dead. Ramu can identify the killers, but since the police will not listen to a blind boy they have to think of an alternative.

Now read on...

MEETING WITH THE DETECTIVE

HE next morning before leaving for school, Ramu went to his neighbour, Mr. Anand. His own parents were illiterate. But Mr. Anand, a clerk in a government department, read the morning newspaper.

The Gopalan murder was squeezed into a small column on an inside page. The murdered man, the news item said, was a small-time crook. The police believed the murder was the handiwork of a rival gang.

Ramu went to school with a perplexed mind. Throughout the morning he could not concentrate on his lessons. During the lunch break he sought out Sunil and gave him a detailed account of the happenings of the previous afternoon.

Sunil and Ramu were close friends. There was perfect understanding between the two. If Ramu was certain that Mr. Gopalan was not a crook, Sunil accepted it without hesitation.

"Sure," Sunil said when Ramu asked him if he knew where Mr. Om Prakash's office was. "It's on our bus route. I know where to get off. We shall go there after classes are over."

So after the school bell had rung for the final time that day, Ramu and Sunil boarded the usual bus, but got down half-way.

The detective's office was in an ancient building. A few cars were in the courtyard, while the inside of the building wore a busy look.

Sunil approached a chaprassi seated on a stool just outside the door of one of the rooms.

"We would like to speak to Mr. Om Prakash," he said in an unnaturally loud voice. Ramu sensed that Sunil was nervous.

He was no better. He could sense a small knot of lear in the pit of his stomach. Try as he might, he could not shake it off. He had never committed a crime in his life. So he could not really understand the feeling of fear.

"Ah, now, would you?" said the man with pretended seriousness. "Speak to Mr. Om Prakash eh. Well, to tell you the truth I'd like to speak to him myself. Ha ha ha."

"We are serious," stammered Sunil. "We have some information that might be useful to him."

The chaprassi had a most irritating habit of repeating snatches of conversation

"Serious, eh? Useful information, eh? Now let me tell you something, boy. Mr. Om Prakash is too busy a person to waste his time on kids like you. So beat it."

The boys, taken aback, were about to retreat when the man suddenly heaved himself up and raised his right hand in salute.

"Who are these boys?" Ramu heard a voice ask.

"Don't know, sir, want to meet you. Claim they have some information."

"About what?"

"About the Gopalan murder, sir," Sunil chipped in quickly.

"The Gopalan murder! Come with me, you two."

Ramu felt that a note of caution had crept into the voice. Or was he imagining things?

The man led them into his cubicle. Sunil helped Ramu into a chair, while the private eye seated himself across the table

"I am Om Prakash," he said. The note of caution was still in his voice.
"What do you know about the Gopalan murder?"

"Not I, sir," Sunil said hastily. "That's Ramu, my friend who lives in that building. He'll tell you."

Ramu sensed the detective relax. His voice became frankly sceptical.

"A blind boy! Is this some kind of a joke or something? Let me warn you, fellows. Don't play silly pranks on me."

"No sir," Ramu interrupted hastily, speaking for the first time. "Please let me tell you what I heard."

He spoke rapidly, as if afraid of being asked to

shut up. His voice carried a note of sincerity.

"Boka and Ranga,"
Ramu concluded. "They
were the ones who killed
Mr. Gopalan. I can identify them by their voices,
sir, believe me."

"A most likely story,"
Om Prakash said and
Ramu noticed that the
tension was back in his
voice. The detective
shifted uneasily in his
chair. The man seemed to
have become nervous all
of a sudden.

Sunil had not noticed a thing "Ramu has wonderful ears," he spoke up for his friend. "He is telling you the truth"

"The truth indeed," Om Prakash snapped back now visibly angry. "Look, you two, everyday we have cranks coming to this office with fantastic stories. Your friend's story beats them all by a mile."

"But .." Ramu was about to protest, when the detective stood up, the chair scraping noisily as he did so.

"If your friend had not been blind, I would have shown him what we do to people who tell lies. Do you imagine detectives are fools and simpletons? Out, both of you, and don't come back for your own good!" Sunil and Ramu jerked out of their chairs. Suddenly the detective caught Ramu by the shoulders and hissed into his ears.

"Let me give you some advice, Surdasji. Go straight home from here and keep your mouth shut. Don't tell anyone your fibs, even as a joke. It's not safe to lie about criminals, do you understand?"

Ramu nodded mutely, struggling to get out of Om Prakash's vicious grip. The two boys walked out of the office, Sunil urging Ramu to hurry. Only when they were outside did Sunil let out a sigh of relief.

"Oh, my God! what a grouchy character! Seemed madder than that beggar who sits outside the school gate."

"He was not angry," Ramu said flatly. "He seemed to be afraid."

Sunil looked closely at his friend's face and found it grim.

"Afraid? That man afraid? My left toe! My heart was in my mouth and you tell me the detective was afraid!"

"I don't understand,"
Ramu was still serious.
"Things are getting
confused. Why should
Mr. Om Prakash be so
nervous if he didn't be-

lieve me? Something is wrong somewhere."

Sunil tapped Ramu on his forehead. "What's wrong is in here?" he said. "Everybody, even the police, the private detective and the press, say Gopalan is a crook. You claim he isn't. We have just escaped from the clutches of an angry man. You say he is not angry, but afraid!

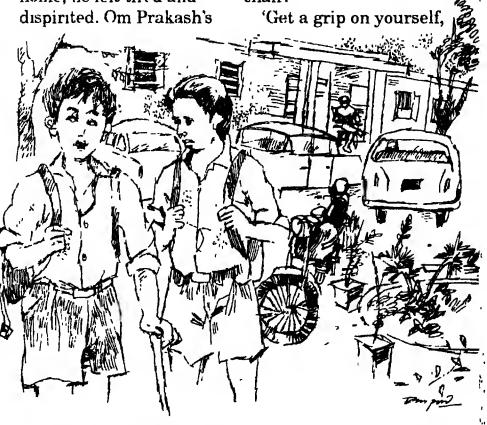
"Tell you what," Sunil added, getting no response from Ramu. "something is wrong with me too, for having believed you enough to come to this stupid place."

The Attack

When Ramu reached home, he felt tired and dispirited. Om Prakash jibe at his blindness, his calling him Surdasji, had hurt him deeply. Even Sunil had sounded sceptical and Ramu, thinking things over, began to doubt himself.

Had he really heard those footsteps or were they simply a hallucination, strange and inexplicable? Was he wrong about Uncle Gopalan? Had he really been a criminal? Had Ramu badly misjudged his character?

A wave of sadness swept over him. He did not feel the slightest trace of hunger. He threw his school bag and cane onto his table and sat on his chair.



Ramu,' he told himself. 'Sweep the cobwebs from your mind and try to think clearly.'

The mysterious
Mr. Gopalan. Even if he
had misjudged the man,
there was something
strange surrounding him.

The police had taken his body away and seized everything in his room. Last evening the room had been scrubbed and cleaned and all traces of its former occupant removed.

The shop too was dismantled the same day, the entire stock seized and removed by the police. Mr. Anand told him that new tenants would be moving in at both places in a day or two.

But a man's existence could not be wiped out so quickly. Mr. Gopalan must have had near and dear ones, parents, wife, children, even distant relatives. Someone at least should have turned up, if for nothing else at least to claim his personal effects.

It almost seemed as if the police were conspiring to ensure that no trace ever remained to show that a man called Gopalan ever existed.

What about Om Prakash, the private eye?

Was Ramu wrong about him, too? Why should a detective sitting in his own office be frightened by two kids?

As Ramu let his mind wander, doubts again seized him.

Then, suddenly, Ramu sprang out of his chair, taut and alert.

He strained his ears and listened, his body tense with fear.

Footsteps were coming up the stairs.

Familiar footsteps. He had heard them only yesterday.

Two people. His memory stirred, striving to make sure.

Two persons were moving stealthily up the stairs, slowly, deliberately. Even though they treaded lightly in order to make the least sound, Ramu had no doubt who they were.

Boka and Ranga!

Suddenly, with frightening clarity, Ramu knew he had not been wrong. Those footsteps were no hallucination, the snatch of conversation he had heard, no figment of his imagination.

But he had talked only to Sunil and Mr. Om Prakash. Then how did the killers know?

For a few fearful moments he stood petrified with terror. Then he moved.

With quick silent steps he reached the open door, shut it as quietly as possible and drove home the bolt. Then he waited with his ear to the door, trying to quieten the sound of his breathing.

The footsteps stopped in front of the door. One of the men rapped softly on the panel.

No response.

More knocking, louder and louder. Ramu stood still, someone tested the door.

"He is inside," Boka whispered to Ranga.

"Sleeping, maybe. I'll break the door open."

"Right. But we mustn't make too much noise."

They were really desperate men.

The door was made of flimsy material. It would be a matter of minutes.

Ramu retreated at once to his parents' room. He bolted the door from inside and stood stock still for a moment to recover his breath.

He was trapped. The doors would stop the killers only temporarily. He picked up the two charpoys' in his parents' room and propped them up against the door. They were light, rope contraptions and could hardly be

a barrier.

There was a sudden cracking sound as the outer door gave way and Ramu's heart lurched.

He traced his fingers against the wall till he came to the window. He threw the window open. At once a soft breeze, carrying with it the sounds of the traffic moving on the road forty feet below, wafted into the room.

There was no escape.
Spurred by panic, Ramu climbed to the window sill just as the killers having searched the other rooms, began battering the bedroom door.

His only chance of survival, a very thin one at that, was to hang from the window sill with his hands and let go the moment the killers entered the room. The forty feet plunge to the sidewalk below was sure to kill him. But, between the two devils outside and the deep sea, he would choose the latter.

As he let down his feet on the other side, they touched concrete, to his great surprise. With a glimmer of hope Ramu realised that a small ledge, less than a foot wide, protruded from the wall at floor level.

Ramu straightened

himself, feet resting on the concrete ledge, hands gripping the window sill. His heaving chest was pressed against the wall.

He felt for the window's lower bolt, found it and carefully poised it over a slight projection. Then, teetering on the ledge, he shut the windows.

A sharp tap on the windows at the centre and the bolt slid home into its socket, closing the window firmly from the inside.

Cautiously he turned round on his feet until his back and head were pressed against the wall.

Now he had nothing to hold on to. Fortunately for him the currents of wind were mild. If a gale had struck him at that moment, it would have plucked him off the ledge like a leaf in autumn.

For once in his life
Ramu could have thanked
his stars for being blind.
In a person with normal
vision the sight of the
dizzying forty-feet drop
might have induced
vertigo, causing him to
lose balance and plummet
to his death.

But not Ramu. Because he was blind he depended on touch rather than eyesight. His body too was tuned to guard against accidental fails and collisions. Thus his reflexes and ability to balance himself were extraordinary.

Ramu knew that, to maintain his position on the ledge, he had to lean against the wall. If he were to lean forward, even slightly, gravity would pull him down.

He spread out his hands, palms pressed against the smooth wall. His feet were almost at the edge of the ledge. He had to keep them away from the wall in order to lean back.

Having adopted a relatively stable posture, Ramu began sliding away from the window towards the junction where the two sides of the L-shaped building met.

He tried to control his imagination by not thinking of the danger he was in. All he needed was time. Inch by dreary inch, with the poise of an acrobat, Ramu began his journey across the ledge. He had to hurry, for any moment the window might open and he would be discovered.

Unknown to him several factors were gaining for him the time he so desperately needed. Just a week ago his father had brought in a carpenter to

instal a new door to the bedroom, the previous one having fallen off its hinges. Also the two charpoys had got entangled and were proving to be more effective barriers than Ramu had hoped. And finally, the closed window had baffled the killers, causing them to recheck the other rooms.

Meanwhile, Ramu kept moving. He came upon a window, felt along it to discover that it was closed, denying him entry into what must have been the Anand family's quarters. A few feet later there was another window, also closed.

Ramu quickened his slide, panic rising in him once again, expecting at any moment the sound of gunshots.

Then, abruptly, Ramu's left hand touched empty air and he almost fell. With a desperate effort he brought his hand against the wall, his body swaying perilously.

He had reached the corner of the building. With all the energy left in him, Ramu swung round the corner and came to a stop on the other side, his body tired and aching, sweat glistening on his forehead.

Not a moment too soon. Seconds later the bedroom window burst open and a head emerged. Perplexed eyes looked right and left. But the boy was nowhere to be seen.

Ramu stayed there for about fifteen minutes. For the moment he knew he was safe, but for how long? For one thing his limbs were aching. He might not be able to hold out much longer. If the wind started blowing, it would be imposible to maintain his balance. His perch on the ledge was precarious indeed.

Ramu waited for the tension to drain out of his body before he resumed his quest for an open window.

He found one almost immediately and heaved a sigh of relief. It was a small window, far smaller than the others.

Ramu thrust his left hand into the welcome opening, firmly gripping the window sill.

With this grip as a lever, he turned slowly round until his chest was pressed against the wall.

He was now in a position to grip the window sill with both hands.

Straining every ounce of energy left in him, the boy hauled himself in. Once inside, he fell upon the floor, his body racked with pain and exhaustion.

Now that the ordeal was over, Ramu began to tremble violently. His head spun and bile rose to his throat. Spreadeagled on the floor, his head resting on a bundle of rags, Ramu fell into an exhausted slumber.

How long he lay in that position he did not know. When he awoke at last, his head was heavy, but the shivers had ceased. His body and joints ached. Slowly his hands probed here and there and touched a pail and a broom. So he was in the broom-closet at the end of the corridor. That explained why the window was small. A sudden babble of familiar voices passing across the corridor outside made Ramu sit up. He dragged himself to the door of the closet, which was locked from outside and began hammering on it as loudly as he could.

The babble stopped. He could hear the small lock outside being broken. The door was flung open.

Ramu stumbled out, falling into the arms of his amazed father.

To be continued



Story: Svetha Venkatram (7)

HERE was a sixyear-old girl called
Anjali. She had a
sister who was four years
old. Her name was Rupa.
They had a lemon lying in
their kitchen. Their
mother had promised
them that she would
make lemon juice for the
next day. But the lemon
did not want to be
squeezed.

So he wished at night when a star broke that he would become a lemon man. A fairy came and made him into a lemon man. The fairy told him to walk out of the house.

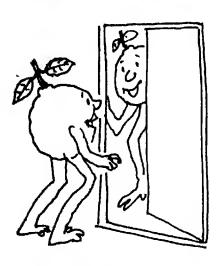
So, he walked and walked and reached a cottage made of lemons.



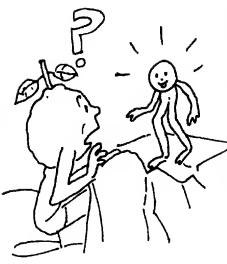
He knocked at the big lemon door. Another lemon man opened the door. "Come in," he said. He went in and found seven lemon men living in the house. They said, "As you are a lemon man too, you can stay with us."

He agreed.

One day they decided to make cheese for breakfast. So they went to the market to buy a packet of milk. The shopkeeper

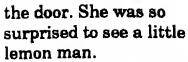


was very surprised to see eight lemon men standing all in a row and wanting one packet of milk. He gave them a packet of milk. They made cheese and kept it in the refrigerator for the next morning. At night when a star broke the eight cheese balls wished that they would become cheese men. A fairy came and made them all into cheese men.



The next morning when the lemon men got up they were surprised to see the cheese balls turned into cheese men. So the lemon men asked the cheese men to stay with them. They stayed.

But what about Anjali and Rupa? Their lemon man wanted to see them. So one day he went to their house. Rupa opened

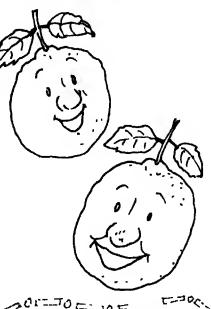


She asked him, "Who are you?"

He told her the whole story.

She called Anjali, their mother and father. They were very happy to meet him.

After that he went to his lemon house.



ANSWERS TO CROSSQUIZ

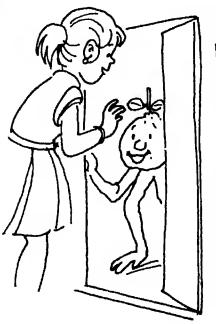
(See page 25)

Across

1. Apple cart 6. Lazy
7. Nymphs 8 Owl 9 Ease
11 Off 12. Head 13. Root
14. Is at 16. Donate-

Down

- 1. All work 2. Puzzle
- 3. Clay feet 4. Reap
- 5. Best foot 10. Short
- 11. Odds 13. Run 15. As



The Overripe Banana Experience

Story: C.N. Sreejith (16)

favourite hobby was collecting empty matchboxes. I used to count them daily. Whenever my mother had an empty matchbox in the kitchen, she would throw it out and I would run after it. My parents never asked me not to collect matchboxes, so I continued to do it.

I housed my collection in an ordinary cardboard box kept in an old suitcase alongwith my other toys.

Once, during the summer vacation, we planned to visit my grandma. I had to leave my collection of matchboxes behind. I had my suitcase of toys in the garage, behind some old rags and tools.

We returned after a fortnight, and the first thing I did was to open my suitcase to count the matchboxes. It was dark in the garage and as I put my hand inside the box I touched something slippery. I felt I had

touched an overripe banana, which I really hate. I ran to my mother and angrily queried, "Who put that nasty overripe banana in my suitcase?"

Mother wrinkled her brows in wonder. She replied with a question, "Why should I put bananas in your box? Ask Sreeni. He might have done it."

Sreeni was father's brother's son and often played dirty pranks on me. I went to him and without asking for an explanation punched him. Since Sreeni is the elder of the two of us, he couldn't bear it.

He gathered himself and searched for a stick to beat me, saying, "You, you... you dared to hit me. I shall tell your father about your misbehaviour. Before that..."

I didn't allow him to complete the sentence. I said, "Why did you put those rotten bananas in my box? That is why I hit you."

He stopped his search for the stick and looked at me with wonder in his eyes. He asked in surprise, "I, put. . . . banana. . . oh my. . . . I never did it. . . must be somebody else. . ."

We heard a commotion near the garage and rushed to see what was happening.

I was shocked to see the size of the dead chenathandan, a snake, highly venomous, which can see only in the dark.

"Sreeji, did you open your box after you came back?" my father queried.

"Yes," I answered, waiting for an explanation.

My mother suddenly hugged me and cried, "So this was your banana, was it?"

It didn't take much time for me to understand the whole story. My mother however spent about four hours daily for about a week, to explain the whole thing to our neighbours!

As for me, my spine

when I remember that incident. I stopped collecting matchboxes after that and at present am collecting currencies of various countries. Had I tried to throw out that overripe "banana", I would not have been here to write this for you!

WHO COULD BE THE CREATOR OF THIS WORLD?

Amvuta Hungund

Who could be the creator of this world? Not I. Is it you? Is he Christian, Muslim or Hindu? Oh! Can you give me a clue? Who can be the creator of this world? Is it fun to create So many colours Green, grey and blue? Sometimes I just wonder ls it a dream Or is it true? Why can't I see Him? Is the light very dim? But no The light is very bright And clear is my sight Then why can I not see Him? The clouds that cause rain, And the hands that cut grain, All this is His creation And many more things that I can't mention, I know that to this question There is no solution, But still, towards this question, I have great attraction.

PEN-FRIENDS CORNER

GIRLS

Those who wish to enrol themselves as members of the Children's World Penfriends Club may do so by sending us the accompanying form. Cut out the form, fill up the details neatly, and mail it to us. As the form helps in indexing preservation of records, its use is a MUST. All those who send in their particulars in the form will get priority in enrolment. Limit your hobbies and choice of countries to have pen-TWO. friends from 10 Whenever members write to their pen-friends it will be advisable to mention their member-number.

5874
R.V Seetha Lakshmı
(girl, 12)
25 Harleys Road
Air India Colony
Madras 600010, India
Pen-friends, stamps
USA, Australia

5875
Sangitha Chhetri (g, 8)
Lingemethang Community
School
P O Mongar
East Bhutan
Singing, pen-friends
Nepal, U K

5876 Shweta Rishi (g. 14) 21 B Industrial Area A Ludhiana (Punjab), India Movies, dancing Any country

5877
A Sumana (g, 14)
D 20/4 D.R D.O. Complex
C V. Raman Nagar
Bangalore-93, Karnataka
India
Reading, music
U.K., France

5878
Kalpana (g. 14)
Azad Nagar
H No. 1-9-1
Raichur
Karnataka 584101
Pen-friends, sports
India

CHILDREN'S WORLD PEN-FRIEN ENROLMENT FORM	NDS CLUB
Member No (To be filled by office)	Issue dated
Name Master/Miss (IN BLOCK LETTERS)	Age*year
Address:.	
Hobbies:	****** * ****** *** * *
Pen-friend wanted in (Country)	
* Age limit : 16 years	Signature

GIRLS

	OIMA	
5879	New Delhi 110017	Vikaspuri
Jyoti Rai (g, 10)	Reading, sports	New Delhi 110018
Post Box 285	Other than India	Music
G.P.O. Thimphu		India
Bhutan	5885	
Dancing, pen-friends	S. Krithika (g, 12)	5890
India	C-50 Udaynagar IFFCO	Sonali Sharma (g, 14)
*48*****	Gandhidham	B-15 Soami Nagar
5880	Kutcheh	New Delhi 110017, India
Namita Moses (g, 9)	Gujarat 370203, India	Music, reading
11 Hailey Road	Reading, stamps	Any country
New Delhi 110001	Japan, Philippines	
Cycling, arts and craft	• / • •	5891
Any country	5886	Anshu Shukla (g. 11)
Any country	Sarıta Harı (14)	C/o Prof. P.R. Shukla
5881	108/12A Laxmi Apartments	3 Govind Ganj, Datia
Nee [†] a Pradhan (g, 16)	East Park Road	Madhya Pradesh 475661
C/o Promod Pradhan	Malleswaram	India
Tongsa (D.O.R.)	Bangalore 560003	Writing poetry, singing
Bhutan	Karnataka, India	India, UK.
Dancing, reading	Reading, music	
Any country	U.S A., Switzerland	5892
January Communication of the C		Aishvarya Tonpe (g, 12)
5882	5887	B-32 Defence Colony
Ugyen Choden (g, 13)	Hemangıni Dhimar (g. 12)	New Delhi 110024, India
Lobesa Primary School	IFFCO, Uday Nagar	Reading, swimming
P.O. Wangdi Phodrang	D-104, Gandhidham	Any country
Bhutan	Kutchch	
Dancing, reading	Gujarat, India	5893
Japan, U.K	Reading, chess	D Valli (g, 11)
• •	Japan. U.S A.	5 Hnd Cross Street
5883		D. K Nagar, Mandaveli
Bhawana Thakur (g, 13)	5888	Madras 600028
Richlog House	Ekta Nagar (g. 11)	Tamil Nadu, India
Baluganj	D 2/128 Bathla Apartments	
Shimla-5, Himachal Pradesh	43 I.P. Extension	Any country
Dancing, singing	Patparganj	5004
India	Delhi 110092, India	5894
and a	Games, reading	Dechen Tshomo (g, 12)
5884	Any country	C/o Samdrup Wangmo
	5889	Langthel Pry. School
Ruchira Bhattacharya		Tongsa, Bhutan
(g, 8) D- 292 Sarvodaya E nclave	Shubha Manalı (g, 15) DG III/90	Stickers, movies
D-252 Sarvouaya Eliciave	DG III/80	Any country

BOYS

5900 5905 5895 M. Shamnath (b. 10) Christie (b, 16) Daljeet Singh Jolly T-2-A Ist Avenue. (boy,11)C/o Mrs. Aley T. M. WZ-15B/4. Krishna Puri Dechencholing Primary Ashok Nagar Gali No. 10 Madras 600083 School New Delhi 110018 Thimphu, Bhutan Tamil Nadu, India Singing, coins Football. Table tennis Reading, cricket Any country Any country UK, U.S.A. 5906 5896 5901 Bobby Krishna (b. 16) T. Ashok (b. 14) Anupam Banerjee (b, 12) Roll No. 2470, Prasad (Jrs.) 20. Sullivan Garden Road G-1339. Chittaranjan Park Samuk School IInd Floor New Delhi 110019 Kazhakootam Mylapore Stamps, Table tennis Thiruvananthapuram 695585 Madras 600004 Any country Tamil Nadu, India Philately Stamps & coins cricket 5902 Any country Australia. Manish R. Majumdar 5907 Russian Federation (b, 13)Amit Kumar Jha (b, 14) 28 B Shantiniketan Co S, o S.S. Jha. 5897 Behind Pradip Society S. E (Excavation) Manish Agrawal (b, 13) Near Ashirwad Marriage Sasti Township S/o G.P. Agrawal Hall PO. Rajura. Nepal Chemical Waghadia Road Dist Chandrapur & Soap Ind Parcda-19, Gujarat, India Maharashtra 442906, India Birganj Stamps Computer programming. Nepal USA, UK Coin collection Stamps, pen-friends Any country Europe, USA 5903 5908 Dipen Baro (b, 11) 5898 Manoj Mongar (b, 16) Co Postmaster Venkat Reddy (b, 14) C/o Bal Bahadur Along 791001 Laidlaw Memorial School Indian Embassy Dist West Slang Ketti P.O Thimphu Arunachal Pradesh, India Nilgiris 643215 Bhutan Cricket, reading Tamil Nadu, India Music, volleyball Stamps, reading Any country 5904 India B Vishwanath (b, 12) 5909 MIG. 2264, BHEL, MIG. Abishek Srikumar (b. 11) 5899 1 25A, 'Balaram Flats' Colony Sandeep Singh (b, 13) PO Ramachandrapuram Ist Street—Abhiramapuram H. No. 75A/Sector-30A Chandigarh, Haryana. India Hyderabad 500032, India Madras 600018, India Stamps, reading Reading, swimming Stamps, cycling

Any country

U.S.A., Australia

Japan, India

BOYS

5910 Stamps and coins 5920 Rosevelt A. Rodrigues Bolivia, Guyana S Nagendra (b, 13) (b, 16) P-1. University Quarters 5915 Gomes Ward Poona University K Dorairajan (b. 12) Cauelossim, Salcett Ganeshkhind 15. Bharathi Dhasan Street Pune 410107. Maharashira Goa E B. Colony (W) Stamps, painting India Erode-11, Tamil Nadu Cambodia, New Guiner Electronics, cricket India U.S A., UK 5911 Stamps, tennis Ramesh Singh Bora (b, 12) Any country 5821 C/o M S. Dhami 5916 Debeswar Sengyung (b, 16) BALCO Scope Office C o K. N. Thaosen Yogendra Tripathi (b. 16) Complex Near Fishery Office A-1413, 13, Indira Nagar 3rd Floor, 7, Lodi Road Lucknow 226016 (UP.) N C. Hills New Delhi 110003 India Assam 788819, India Reading, nature walks Chess, writing poetry Music, cricket Switzerland, USA India, U.S.A. USA, Australia 5912 5917 5922 Thurim Ringbo (b, 11) Balu Kurian C. Kovoor C.o Mr Jayrım Ringbo C Sudhan Kumar (b. 12) (b, 15) Plot No 309 AKG Nagar P B 2955. Samik School Thimphu Jayrım Centre Perurkada Kazhakootam Qr No. B-4 Thiruvananthapuram-5 Thumphu, Bhutan Thiruvananthapuram Kerala, India Singing, reading Kerala 695585, India Drawing, bird watching US.A., UK Music, painting Barbados, UK 5813 Any country Mahesh V Inamder (b.16) 5923 5918 C/o Vishwas Inamder Alok Bhandari (b. 16) Rakesh Yadav (b. 13) A-1 Samarth Nagar E-23, C-Scheme, 2330, Abhimanyu House 24C, Majas Road Gokhale Marg Samik School Jogeshwari (E) Jaipur, India Rewa 486001. (MP), India Bombay 400060, Stamps and coins, cricket ('ricket, stamps Maharashtra, India Any country Japan, France Reading, pen-friends UAE, Argentina 5924 5919 Jack Sang Chang (b, 16) Harish Kumar Walia (b. 15) 5814 GPO Bomdila J. Prabhu Arun Raj (b. 12) Bagamoyo Road, West Kameng AP 1006 15th Central PO Box-2827 Arunachal Pradesh 790001 Dar-es-Salaam Cross Road India Mahakash Bharathi Nagar Tanzania (Africa) Pen-friends Painting, stamps Vyasanpadi USA, Russian Federation Afghanistan, Sri Lanka Madras 600039, India

BOYS

Thangboi Gangle (b. 13)
West Wind, Mulhoi Road
P.O. Haflong 788819
N C Hills
Assam, India
Painting, stamps
Mexico. China

5926
Pranjol Sharma (b, 14)
West Wind, Mulhoi Road
P O Haflong, N C Hills
Assam 788819
India
Swimming, trekking
Mexico, U S A

5927
Rahul J Jain (b 13)
144, Motiwala Bldg
1st floor
Lamington Road
Opp Navjivan Society
Bombay 400007
Maharashtra, India
Swimming, cycling
Other than India

5928
Saurabh Indra (b, 9)
C o RS Prasad
C-62, Nanakpura
South Moti Bagh
New Delhi 110021
Horse riding, reading
U.S.A., U.K

5929
Chirag Singh Cheema
(b.15)
IX-A, Army Public School
84, Nehru Road
Lucknow Cantt (U.P.)
India

Horse riding, swimming U.S A., U.K

5930
Ifthikhar Javed A. (b, 10)
C/o Aboobacker Bınzagar
International, P.O. Box-96
Al Khobar 31952
K S.A
(Saudi Arabia)
Art, stamps
Any country

5931
Ashish Mittal (b, 11)
24, Guru Nanak Colony
Rajpura 140401, Punjab
India
Stamps, drawing
Any country

5932
Kaushik Giri (b, 14)
Qr. No. 33, L5, Road No 5
Farm Area. Kadma
Janishedpur 831005
Bihar, India
Football, stamps
Any country

5933
Cherian K George (b, 8)
C o George C Oommen
Carethedathu Padivattom
P O Edapally
Cochin, Kerala, India
Stamps, coins
Any country

5934
Varunpreet Singh (b, 10)
A-379, Defence Colony
New Delhi 110024
Reading, painting
U.S.A. U.K.

5935
Deepak A. Aranha (b, 13)
'Evermoh'
S.L. Mathais Road
Falnir
Mangalore 575001
Philately, photography
Australia, U.S.A.

5936
Pema Kelzang (b, 16)
Post & Telegraphs
Civil Wireless
Damphu Tshirang
Bhulan
Makings friends, music
Any country

5937
Kharka Bahadur Darlanı
(b. 15)
Post & Telegraphs
Cıvıl Wireless
Damphu Tshirang
Bhutan
Reading, sport
U.S A. Switzerland

5938
Vipen Pahwa (b. 12)
S o Sudershan Pahwa
24/B/Block Shital Ganj
B S R
Stamps, and coins
Any country

5939
Sukhrane Sathe (b, 15)
Chambal House
Sainik School
Rewa 486001, M.P., India
Badminton, reading
Any country

C for Clown, C Law Caramilk. C for Cowboy, C for d Clown, C for Cara C. C for Cowbo Caram' lk. C for Clown or Caramilk. Cool, C 1, C for Caramilk. C 'own, C for milk. G k. C for Cool, C for Caramil or Clow for * for Caramilk. C for Cool, C for for Cowboy, C for Caramilk. C for Car , C f for Caramilk. C for Cowboy, C for Caramilk. c for C Clown, C for Caramilk. C for Cowboy, C for Carami own, C for Caramilk. C for Cowboy, milk. C fo C for Clown, C for Caramilk. C for Co for Caram lilk. C for Clown, C fo Cool, C C for Caramilk. milk. C fc for Car. for Cool, C f for Cla. fo aramilk. C for Cowboy for Caram Cowboy, C for Caramilk. C for Caram C for Clern, C for Caramilk. C for Caramilk. C for Caramilk. C for